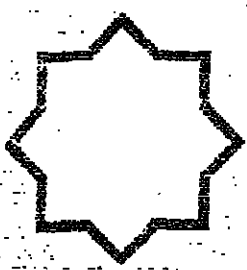


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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

A hot session looms for government in Lower House

By Hamdan Al Haj

Special to The Star
THE EXTRAORDINARY session of the Lower House of Parliament, which began on Saturday, promises to be a long and controversial one with 60 items on the agenda, including some sensitive draft laws.

Government and the deputies started on the wrong foot when in the opening session, Sunday, opposition deputies rejected the Jordanian-French Financial Protocol. They said if adopted, the protocol will increase Jordan's debt burden.

Other members appealed to the government to cancel the protocol signed between the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) and a foreign company assigned to carry out oil exploration works in Jordan. The deputies expressed their doubts about the origin of the company and its real intentions.

Deputies also returned the Petra (Jordan News Agency) draft law and the Radio and TV Corporation draft law because they lacked the necessary covering letters.

The discrepancy in views between the government and

opposition was seen by observers as an ominous start. No sooner the session was opened than 41 deputies sent a memorandum to the speaker of Lower House, Saad Hayel Srour, calling for a special session to discuss government decision to remove bread subsidies and raise its prices.

The 41 deputies belong to different blocs in parliament representing opposition, centrists and pro-government parties. The memo can be considered as an indirect vote of no confidence for the government. Those who signed it include former ministers such as Abdel Baqi Jammo, Nader Al Duheirat, Ibrahim Zeid Al Kilani, Dr Abdullah Al Akaleh, Samir Habashneh, Mansour Bin Tarif, Trad Al Qadi, Mohammad Addoub Al Zabin and Abdul Majed Al Azzam in addition to former Prime Minister Tahir Al Masri.

Opposition deputies who signed the memorandum were: Ahmed Al Kofahi, Bassam Al Omoush, Mohammad Oweidha, Hammam Sa'id, Mohammed Al Haj, Ahmad Al Kassasbeh, Bassam Haddadin,



Deputies open Lower House session

Abdul Mune'm Abu Zanat, and Deib Abdullah.

Other pro-government deputies who signed this memo were Fawaz Al Zu'bi, Abdullah Akhu Rishaidah Fawzi Al Tumi, Hani Hajazi, Jamil Al Hishoush, Ali Shaiti and Hatem Al Ghazawi.

The memorandum has angered some ministers who expressed dissatisfaction with the actions of some deputies.

Foreign affairs and ending with Labor and Social Development.

Despite Prime Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti's attempts to lure some opposition deputies to his side—he invited Islamic Action Front deputy, Dr Bassam Al Omoush to accompany him on his recent visit to Algeria and France—it became apparent that Dr Omoush is still bound by his party's whip.

On Sunday, a number of heads of professional federations and general secretaries of some parties together with representatives of social and women organizations staged a sit-in opposite Parliament protesting the government decision to hike bread prices.

On the other hand, Mr Kabariti, meeting with the crowds participating in the sit-in, agreed to hold a debate saying "I'm ready for the challenge, I shall debate with you through TV. If you manage to convince me, I promise to reconsider all procedures."

The bread issue will cast a shadow over the extraordinary

Continued on page 2

Hervé de Charette passe par la Jordanie
Voir page 12

Levy meets with Arafat, pledges more talks

By Glenn Frankel
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

JERUSALEM—In a small villa near the Gaza Strip military checkpoint that has long been a symbol of the enmity and mistrust between Israelis and Palestinians, Israel's foreign minister met Tuesday with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and said that both sides are committed to advancing the fragile peace process.

David Levy and Arafat emerged from the 90-minute session with smiles and handshakes but no breakthroughs beyond a pledge to hold more talks in the future. But in many ways the meeting itself was a breakthrough. Not only was it the first time that a senior official of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new right-wing government has met with the Palestinian leader, but it was also the first time that a senior member of the Likud political party—which long treated Arafat as a murderer, war criminal and crypto-Nazi—had sat down with the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

For years, Likud leaders had denounced any Israeli who met with Arafat, and the party had repeatedly broadcast footage of



Levy and Arafat meet for the first time

Labor Party predecessor Shimon Peres's handshakes with the PLO leader during the recent election campaign, which Netanyahu narrowly won. Still, while commentators noted the unprecedented nature of Tuesday's session, the meeting had an air of inevitability as much of history, and it seemed to constitute another step toward an eventual meeting between Arafat and Netanyahu.

Both Arafat and Levy were effusive after the session. "The meeting was very fruitful and

productive and positive," said the Palestinian leader, who in recent weeks had restrained his rhetoric despite his growing impatience with the new prime minister's hard-line statements and refusal to meet with him. Tuesday, Arafat pledged to work "with open hearts ... side by side in order to support this relationship for the benefit of Israel and the Palestinian people."

Levy praised Arafat's openness and cooperative attitude.

Continued on page 2

Court case brings debate over national unity into focus

By Raed Al Abed

Star Staff Writer
THE CONTROVERSY over the future of Palestinians in Jordan entered a new phase this week when the Amman Public Prosecutor, Mr Jamal Al Zou'bi, referred to the Amman Court of First Instance, Mr Jihad Al Moumuni, editor-in-chief of the weekly *Shihani* newspaper and Dr Ahmad Oweidi Al Abbadi.

Mr Zou'bi charged both men with harming national unity and spreading material that invites intolerance and promotes sectarianism and conflicts between the elements of one nation. He cited the Press and Publication and the Penal Code laws.

The charges against Dr Abbadi, were brought about by a local lawyer, and it was based on an interview *Shihani* had published with Abbadi last June in which he talked about the rights of Jordanians and Palestinians in Jordan. The charges against Moumuni were filed by the Public Prosecutor.

In his interview with *Shihani* Dr Al Abbadi, who has been a controversial figure in Jordanian politics ever since he was elected to Parliament in the 1989 elections, repeated earlier calls for stripping Jordanians of the Palestinian origin from their political rights.



Abbadi

"Palestinians in Jordan are an Arab community and not Jordanians. Their rights are administrative ones, not natural or historical, but only gains, not political or sovereign rights..." Al Abbadi said in the two-page interview. "I will feel comfortable if the Palestinians leave."

In his list of charges, the Public Prosecutor said he found no excuse for the press while practicing its freedom within the state of law to break from its noble message and publish material that insults national unity.

"The Constitution guarantees the freedom of expression for



Habboul

citizens, but democracy does not mean that person could do what ever he wishes," Zou'bi said.

Dr Abbadi's statements were widely criticized by different sectors in the country. Advocate Ahmad Habboul, a Jordanian of a Palestinian origin, took the initiative and filed a lawsuit against Dr Abbadi charging him with prejudicing national unity. In his lawsuit, Mr Habboul highlighted 13 excerpts from the interview.

"Al Abbadi's statements are the crime of the prejudicing of national unity," because they put in doubt the citizenship of Jordanians of Palestinian origin," he said. "It also creates doubts over their affiliation and loyalty to their country, Jordan."

Mr Habboul told *The Star* that he will also be filing a civil lawsuit against Dr Abbadi in which he will ask for JD 1 million in damages. He said the money will be used to finance the creation of an anti-regionalism center in Jordan.

On his part, Dr Abbadi expressed his surprise at the lawsuit but said that the case was now before the courts. "It is a normal press and publication case," he expressed his astonishment about the reaction of the local and international media over the case.

"The issue of the Jordanian-Palestinian relation is over since His Majesty King Hussein and Parliament appealed to stop it," Dr Abbadi said. "But the new charges against me will re-open the file again."

Dr Abbadi revealed that his lawyer will be former member of the Cassation Court Dr Ahmad Sa'ed Al Moumuni.

"The subject is merely my personal political opinion, it was expressed under the constitution and my freedom of expression, and freedom of orientation," Dr Abbadi said. "I am not worried regarding this case. But I am

amazed at this great worry and concern by the press, which was exaggerated."

But Dr Abbadi's political opinions, which he expressed freely through his weekly columns in a number of newspapers, had labeled him as a hard-line regionalist and an anti-Palestinian. "National unity is a political concept not a legal term. Every political school has its own interpretation concerning national unity. The various political schools also differ in interpreting regionalism and nationalism," he told *The Star*.

"If our affiliation and love of Jordan and Jordanians, and if our insistence concerning the Palestinians' right to return to their homeland and to establish their state on their land, if this talk is considered regionalism, I wonder what nationalism is?" he added.

Dr Abbadi said his views were actually meant to serve the interests of Jordanians and Palestinians. He accused the press of spreading the term 'regionalism'.

Dr Abbadi's writings had invited responses from Jordanians of Palestinian origin. He said that a number of Jordanians

Continued on page 2

Intensive diplomacy aims at ending gridlock in peace process

By Ahmed Shaker

Special to The Star

THE REGION is witnessing intensified diplomacy aimed at the resumption of the peace talks on the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese tracks that is expected to take place in September in Washington.

This comes after the mobilization of talks on the Palestinian-Israeli track as a result of the meeting between PNA President Yasser Arafat and the Israeli Foreign Minister, David Levy.

Through His Majesty King Hussein and Mr Abdul Karim Kabariti, Jordan was able to contribute a great deal to removing the obstacles between Israelis and Palestinians and resume talks which have been frozen since the election of a Likud-led headline government in Israel in May.

Arab leaders expressed support for Jordan in its pursuit to overcome differences between Arab countries and to seek a united position based on the land-for-peace principle.



HRH Prince Hassan receives French Minister de Charette, Tuesday. Prime Minister Kabariti also attended the meeting.

Among Jordan's efforts to revive the talks is the expected summit between King Hussein and Syrian President Hafez Assad on one hand, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's upcoming visit to Jordan, on the other.

Minister Herve de Charette to Jordan last Tuesday also focused on these efforts. The King also received a message from US President Bill Clinton dealing with the future of

Continued on page 2

Palestinians savor Olympic competition, rapport with Israelis

By William Drozdiak
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

ATLANTA—Even before the races start at Olympic Stadium, Majid Abu Maraheel has accomplished everything he set out to achieve. The 32-year-old distance runner knows he can't win a medal, but he already feels triumphant as the first athlete in history to carry the Palestinian flag into the Games.

For Maraheel and his fellow runner, Ihab Salama, the opportunity to compete in the Atlanta Games is a vindication of the nationalist dreams of the two-year-old Palestinian Authority, the self-rule territory headed by Yasser Arafat that encompasses Gaza and the town of Jericho on the West Bank of the Jordan River. "I've been crying with joy so often that I hardly can keep my mind on training," said

Maraheel, a government security agent and the father of five children. "The experience of being here is worth a lifetime of running, but my main purpose is to remind the world that Palestine exists."

Billed as the biggest in history, the Games have lured a record number of 197 teams. The two-man Palestinian squad is one of 28 aspiring or new nations appearing for the first time, including many countries spawned by the fragmentations of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

The tensions from recent conflicts that have changed the world map since the 1992 Barcelona Games are evident on the sprawling campus of Georgia Tech, which serves as temporary home for the 10,000 athletes here. At the dining hall

and the "cardio theater" workout gym, athletes from rival nations such as North and South Korea, China and Taiwan—which is referred to as Chinese Taipei during the Games—Croatia and the rump Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) maintain a frosty distance from each other.

But in contrast, Palestinian and Israeli teams have struck up a rapport. At the opening ceremonies, the heads of their two delegations, Muammer Bissiso of the Palestinian Authority and Ephraim Zinger of Israel, sought out each other on the stadium infield to encourage a fresh dialogue through the Olympics that might infuse new momentum into the stalled Middle East peace process.



Palestinian team at inauguration ceremony of Olympics

"The atmosphere here is very special in that it brings together people from all races, colors and political outlook,"

Zinger said. "We both agreed that we should try to use these Games to create some kind of leverage that would help over-

come barriers between our peoples in real life."

Bissiso said he shared Zinger's vision about employing the Olympics for healthy political goals. "We wanted to set a good tone in taking our pictures together there at the ceremony. We both believe that you can use sports to build bridges of trust between former enemies. If the United States and China can end hostility through Ping-Pong, why we can't we do the same thing between Israelis and Palestinians at the Olympics?"

Bissiso said he regretted, however, that the Israelis refused to allow Palestinians in the diaspora to join the Olympic team. "We could have had between 30 and 40 athletes here, but the Israelis refused to approve the necessary documents because they still contest the right of Palestinians to return to their homeland."

The Palestinian athletes who

Continued on page 3

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JORDAN

WEEK

An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

King recovers from minor operation

His Majesty King Hussein has had a successful operation and is now resting. His personal physician, Dr. Farraj, said the King underwent minor surgery in the London Clinic for the removal of an abscess and is now feeling fine.

The King later received many letters of congratulations for the success of the operation. King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, Sultan Qaboos Oman, the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani directly phoned the King.



Teachers to the Gulf

It seems that the Gulf countries may be opening up at last. Well, in the field of education at least. The head of the United Arab Emirates Contract Committee will arrive in Amman on 30 July to discuss possible ways of cooperation. Mr. Salem Al Ghamai, the general secretary of the Ministry of Education in the UAE is looking for teachers and educational supervisors to start work in the Emirates at the beginning of this coming school year. It is thought that about 150 teachers will be taken. It is understood that the Omani Contract Committee has already agreed to take 250 teachers from this country. At the moment, they are being interviewed.

Ghamdan Park. The project is over 20 dunums and involves creation of a lake to be able to take small boats, a



Al Abbadi

touristic village which embodies Jordan folklore and heritage, a camping area and a car park. There is also a 20 dunums garden called "the small Jordan" which will display the historical and archaeological features of Jordan.

Journalist arrested

Nasser Qamash, chief editor of *Sawt Al Maraa* weekly, was released on bail yesterday. Wednesday as a result of intervention from the Jordan Press Association (JPA). The editor was taken into custody last Saturday after he published an article in his newspaper describing the Raghadan Bus Station as becoming a center for "drugs and prostitution." As a result, the Press and Publication Dept., filed a complaint to the public prosecutor. The article was described as

inaccurate that tarnished the reputation of public facilities in Jordan. Previous request to grant bail to Mr. Qamash was refused, but it seems that the last attempt worked. The new president of the JPA who engineered the release, said "we are against the arrest of any journalist." The arrest of Qamash has created a bit of a problem. His case was taken up by Reporters Sans Frontiers, the Paris-based international organization concerned with the protection of the press. It is said that they appealed to HM King Hussein for his release.

Tourists everywhere!

More and more tourists are coming to Amman than ever before. In the first six months of this year, the number of tourists that have come to Jordan increased by 7.3 percent compared to the same time last year. Up till last June the number of tourists reached 478,596. These were from all over the world. More and more tourists are coming from the Gulf countries. Their number was 193,328, that is about 40 percent of the total number of tourists who have visited the country. Israeli tourists came second place. Their number up till June was 55,694, forming about 11 percent. More tourists are coming from the United States than ever before. The number registered was 48,441. About 148,515 are from the European Union.

Lower House tussle

A bit of a tussle occurred in the opening session of the Lower House of Parliament earlier this week. One Islamic deputy became confused when there was talk about Global Sprint, the new telecommunications company in Jordan. He took the word "global" to mean something very sinister. He cut the word up saying "bal" related to the Zionist Basel conference that was held in Switzerland in 1897, and wondered whether the company had any "Zionist connections." When deputies tried to clarify the misunderstanding and say there was no such connection, the deputy would not be headed, demanding an explanation from the Minister concerned. After

much argument and waste of time, the point was clarified and the deputy took to his seat.

Accidents at work

Accidents at work is a continual problem. It leads to loss of income and is a continuous drain on the economy. Last year, there was 14,663 accidents in all sectors of the economy. However, 7146 of these, about 49 percent was in the industrial sector. The latest report by the Ministry of Labor says that these accidents could have been avoided if only workers took the proper safety procedures, such as the wearing of gloves, shoes, glasses etc. It stated that these accidents cause much losses to the economy every year. Because of these accidents the economy lost more than JD 14.6 million and the number of days lost was 97522.

A longer weekend

A two-day weekend may be just around the corner according to government sources. The Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Ali Abu Al Ragheb says a two-day weekend would be something good to the welfare of citizens in this country. For one thing, it will give government employees, for instance, more time to spend with their families. For another, it would encourage local tourism, something which the government wants. The minister said the two-day holiday was just an idea that is being discussed with the private sector. If the latter is involved, then the idea may never see the light of day!

Al Tawara goes free

The President of *Al Bilad* weekly, Mr. Nayef Al Tawara, has been let off the hook. The State Security Court has issued a verdict acquitting the defendant of the two charges that were brought against him. Mr. Al Tawara was accused



Al Tawara

of possessing forged bank notes and cooperating with a foreign power. The police arrested him after they found \$100,000 forged note bills in the back seat of his car.

Prince pays visit to the north

HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, has toured the north of the country earlier this week. Visiting the Governorate of Ajloun, the purpose of the visit was described as a "humanitarian link" to find out the needs of the people of that area and the possibility for developing the local economy. The emphasis during the visit was how to exploit the resources, including the agricultural ones, to meet the needs of the people.

The Prince said he hoped that a clearer picture would be put forward to start on a comprehensive plan to make Ajloun into a "development unit" within the northern region. At the heart of this unit, the Prince said, would be the attraction of investors to the area.

Prince Hassan said this would involve the need for cooperation, respect for human beings and the proper planning needed before any talk about tourism and the development of infrastructure. The Prince stressed the impor-



tance of the land and the need to protect its resources.

The prince also visited Al Hashimaya, Al Wihdana, Ibbene, Kufrajah, Anjara and Ajloun.

Tawjhi results are less than average

The results of the Tawjhi exams have proved more of a disappointment for some than it was for others. While some students obtained high marks, others failed abysmally. But the average pass rate was only 46.7 percent.

Although this is less than half, it is more or less the same when compared with last year. The high rate of failures would appear most in the art stream. The average pass rate was only 38 percent. This may be attributed to the method of rote learning that exists not only in Jordan, but in the whole of the Arab world. Educational specialists have long called for the reform of the system but to no avail. Rote, the memorization process that is involved in the educational process is seen as tedious and one that lacks motivation.

By contrast, the average success rate for the scientific stream was 63.6 percent, the commercial stream, 41.6 percent, Agriculture, 38.5 percent, Industrial 49.3 percent, Nursing 60.9 percent and Catering 60.1 percent.

The Minister of Education, Mr. Munther Al Masri said that 96,888 took the Tawjhi exam and only 41,000 passed. About 43,000 pupils were from private schools. He said the public and private universities will only be able to take in 20,000 while the rest will either have to go to either community colleges or study abroad. The top pupil in the art stream got 98 percent, whereas in the scientific stream the top got 98.6 percent.

Only 11,000 will be accepted in public universities said Dr. Maqsoos, the vice-president for academic affairs at the University of Jordan said.

JEBA, a way for cooperation

The Jordan-Europe Business Association (JEBA) held a closed meeting at the Philadelphia hotel with the Ambassadors, Counselors and the commercial attaches of the European Union states last week. The meeting focused on the long term plan for JEBA between 1996-2000. The President of JEBA, Mr. Mohammad Fayez Khalib outlined the role of association as a non-profit organization which aims at strengthening the economic relations between Jordan and the EU countries on all levels.

New Czech Ambassador in Amman says prospects for cooperation with Jordan are good

AMMAN, (Petra)—The door is open for more cooperation between Jordan and the Czech Republic, the Czech Ambassador in Amman Tomas Smetanka said.

"We are now in a stage of establishing the bases of economic cooperation which means agreements such as trade, encouragement of investments and air transportation," he added. Mr. Smetanka said that the most important contacts between the two countries would be the human and cultural contacts.

"We have just recently prepared the protocol on cultural and educational cooperation for the coming years which we hope to be signed quite early," he added. He pointed out that the Czech government has awarded two scholarships for the coming school year for Jordanian students for the first time.

The Czech Ambassador expressed his country's interest in development in the Middle East. "For obvious reasons, the Middle East is a strategic region and very close to

Europe," he said. "We want to build contacts and relations with Mediterranean countries," added. Mr. Smetanka said "we specially appreciate the role that Jordan is playing in the region because of the continuity of its policy, stability, its tremendous contributions to the peace process and for establishing peaceful relations in the region in general."

The Czech Ambassador said his country is keen to get into some projects which are being prepared in Jordan. "The Czech companies are apt to implement some projects here in the fields of water, water treatment and transportation," he added.

He pointed out that some of these companies will come to Jordan next September to present themselves in the international fair which will be held in Amman. Mr. Smetanka said the volume of trade between Jordan and the Czech Republic is about \$ 6-8 million per year.

"We feel there is a possibility of expanding that," he added. He said there is a good perspective for developing

political ties between the two countries. "We appreciate the regional and international role of Jordan as well as the internal conditions in Jordan. We know it is a democratic and open political system," he added. He pointed out that the meeting, which took place last year between His Majesty King Hussein and Czech President Vaclav Havel in New York during the meetings of the UN General Assembly, was a fruitful one.

"The two heads of state expressed their will to continue their dialogue and we hope we will have the Czech-Jordanian dialogue on the high level as well as on the working levels," he said. "I feel that these political contacts between the Czech Republic and Jordan, thanks to the democratic system of both countries and the spirit of tolerance and openness, can lead to better understanding, not just between the two countries themselves, but also between the Europeans and the Islamic World," he added.

On the issue of the Balkan region, the Czech Ambassador said "we welcomed and supported the moves towards a peaceful solution in the Balkans, because it is part of the world that is close to us." He pointed out that his country was concerned about the events happening in that region for security reasons and human feelings towards the population.

"We feel that the peace there is a very fragile thing. We, as a Czech Republic, wanted to help in establishing peace and to participate in it. So, Czech soldiers are part of the international peace-keeping forces in Bosnia," he said. He added that "the war in former Yugoslavia meant that you can't be sure about peace anywhere which means you have to take very seriously the security precautions."

Mr. Smetanka said his country after the Warsaw Pact was

dissolved started immediately to look for security guarantees. "It's almost generally acceptable in our country that we should be member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as soon as possible because we consider it to be the functioning security structure that could grant security in Europe as a whole and that is why the Czech Republic become member of the partnership for peace program and now is very actively preparing its armed forces and the political structure to become member of NATO in the near future," he added.

On the involvement of the Czech Republic in development in the Middle East, Mr. Smetanka said that the Czech Republic is trying to find ways on how to actively contribute to the Middle East peace process. "One way is by economic assistance which we feel is very important," he added.

He pointed out that his country has started a plan for economic assistance to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) through financing some projects which will be implemented by Czech Companies. He added that the Czech Republic also is part of the multi-lateral talks on the Middle East in the regional economic development group and water resources group.

"We could help in strengthening the circle of peace in the Middle East," he said. Mr. Smetanka expressed his happiness to be the Czech Ambassador in Amman. "I feel very lucky to be posted in Jordan as an ambassador because my background is Middle East History and Arabic," he said. "I feel that there are good conditions to work on the bilateral relations, knowing Jordan as a country with open people and with an important position in the politics of the region. I welcome this chance to be posted for a few years here in Amman," he added.

Levy meets with Arafat, pledges more talks

Continued from page 1

and added: "I have no doubt that what we established Tuesday will give a push to the process that is meant to bring peace to Israel and the Palestinians."

"They have certain requests from us that are dependent on their fulfilling their commitments," Netanyahu told reporters later.

Israel has a long list of what it calls "broken promises" made by Arafat and the Palestinian Authority he heads. Chief among these are claims that his administration has failed to extradite accused terrorists to Israel, has not cracked down on Islamic militants and has conducted illegal diplomatic and police activity in East Jerusalem—which both the Israelis and Palestinians claim.

Netanyahu suggested that these issues need to be resolved before Israel resumes negotiations on the final status of Gaza and the West Bank. "I think this is what we can hope to achieve at this point," he said. "I don't think we should go beyond that. Let's achieve this goal and then proceed step by step."

Palestinians have also compiled a list of grievances, foremost among them being Israeli delays in redeploying troops in Hebron, the last major West Bank city under Israeli military control. Netanyahu indicated Tuesday that discussions within his government on the redeployment would be wrapped up this week but gave no hint of when the move might take place or under what circumstances.

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A hot summer looms for government

Continued from page 1 session. Opposition parties are expected to use the issue for their own interest as it concerns all members of society. Opposition deputies consider bread a red line that the government must not overstep. The lifting of subsidies comes at a time when Jordanians feel overburdened by worsening economic conditions.

Many laws and draft laws are waiting on the agenda to be discussed by deputies in the current extraordinary session. However, the deputies' major concern will be the government's performance and bread price. If the Kabarti government was able to resolve this matter successfully, then it will emerge stronger than ever.

Mr. Kabarti showed boldness in dealing with the bread issue. He is willing to discuss the matter with deputies and people. Nevertheless, he is under pressure because of Jordan's indebtedness, the worsening economic situation and the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. This means there is no other option, except to carry on with the new strategy.

Intensive diplomacy

Continued from page 1

peace process.

Earlier on and in London where he underwent a minor surgery. His Majesty exchanged in phone calls with President Hosni Mubarak, King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz and the PNA President Yasser Arafat views on the same topic.

Arab leaders are exerting efforts to activate the peace process. There was the Arafat-Assad summit which started yesterday at Damascus. President Mubarak is expected to visit Washington soon. President Clinton on the other hand has sent messages to President Arafat and Lebanese President Elias Hrawi assuring them that everything is on the right course.

The role of France and the European Union was aimed at the resumption of negotiations between the Lebanese and the Syrians on one side and the Israelis on the other. This can lead eventually to the resumption of the final status talks between the PNA and Israel.

Arafat-Assad meeting is targeted at re-establishing Arab joint co-ordination to reach a unified strategy towards peace-making. The sticking issues related to Golan Heights, Jerusalem, south Lebanon, the settlements and the refugees are all facing the same difficulties imposed by Israel since Madrid Conference in 1990.

Observers assure that the new challenges which have resulted after the Israeli elections and the victory of the right-wing hard-line policy towards Arabs, put Arabs, particularly the surrounding states, in a critical position.

Palestinian officials hinted that President Arafat will call on President Assad to release Palestinian prisoners in Syria. Mr. Arafat will also brief Mr. Assad on the results of his latest meeting with the Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy and the Israeli proposals in relation to the withdrawal from Hebron and other sticking issues.

Observers expect the holding of a five-member Arab summit including Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. The meeting will aim at putting forward a unified Arab plan which underpins Arab rights and the so-called land-for-peace principle.

The Middle East will also witness other political activities, as the American co-ordinator of the peace process, Dennis Ross, will visit the area. He will be followed by the US Secretary of State Warren Christopher in a bid to activate the peace process. Political analysts expect Arafat's visit to Syria to build a new era in Palestinian-Syrian relationship which passed through critical stages since 1982.

People & Politics

Bread: Brinkmanship or posturing?

Is the confrontation between the government and the so-called popular movements—a very loose term which supposedly incorporates opposition political parties, unions and professional associations among others—over bread subsidies turning nasty? A quick glance at the main headlines of the weekly press and the incoming faxes at *The Star* suggest that the confrontation is getting uglier and nastier, with allegations of a government crackdown on opponents.

We are waiting for the government to clarify its position, but while we stand by rational calls for more dialogue, we need to remind all players that since Parliament is now in session, it is better to write or call one's deputy to state one's position and hope that the democratic process will do the trick of bringing this extremely controversial topic back from the realm of the sensational into the scope of responsible debate.

On the other hand, the government should not appear to be slaughtering the sheep just to get its wool. As our politicians know only too well, there is more than one way to skin a cat. The bread issue must not be used by either party to achieve ulterior motives; i.e. the government must not lose sight of the fine line separating legitimate right of expression and pure trouble making. By the same token, the popular movement must not be allowed to abuse the feelings of citizens by turning the issue of bread into a source of sedition.

Prime Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti presented a good case for the removal of bread subsidies. But does that change the fact that his government will have to pay a high political price for removing them? One can hardly expect Jordanians to take to the streets in jubilation to celebrate the impending government decision. On the other hand, Mr. Kabariti, himself a deputy, knows only too well that deputies and political parties cannot afford to sit idly by and do nothing while the government makes and takes decisions that affect people's lives.

What is needed now is more brinkmanship and less political posturing. At last since we can't expect the popular movements to deal with the issue in a less sensational manner, our pleas will go to Mr. Kabariti and his diplomatic experience. The Lower House will be the lynch-pin as it prepares to discuss the bread issue with the government. Mr. Kabariti has dealt with the deputies on many occasions and he might feel less comfortable wheeling and dealing with deputies under the dome than with popular movements outside it.

Let the games begi...er...finish!

As if political confusion is not enough to fill our plate, the disqualification of Jordan's Judo player Walid Al Awazem from participating in the Atlanta Olympic games shocked and amused many Jordanians. Al Awazem was forced to withdraw after he failed to show up on time for a mandatory weighing session.

Information is still sketchy but it seems the Jordanian player was not informed by Jordanian administrators and coaches about the time and location of the session. Sources tell us that this is not the first time Jordanian champions miss an Olympic event because of lack of coordination between them and their managers.

During the Los Angeles and Moscow Olympic games, managers and administrators were accused of going shopping while athletes scrambled to register themselves and locate places of events. Jordan was pinning some hopes on Al Awazem especially since our Tae Kwan Do team performed honorably in the Barcelona games. We suggest that once the deputies finish with the bread issue they should concentrate their efforts on finding what in God's name did our athletes and their managers do, other than sightseeing and shopping, while in Atlanta. They should be able to get a first hand report since Minister of Youth Deputy Mohammad Dawoodieh has joined our team in Atlanta, no doubt, to give our players a dose of moral support!

National unity goes to court

News that the General Prosecutor has filed a case against the editor of *Shihani* weekly, Mr. Jihad Al Momani, and former deputy and controversial columnist Dr. Ahmad Owied Al Abbadi on charges of harming national unity and publishing seditious material at the request of Jordanian lawyer Ahmad Habawal brings the issue of regionalism and bigotry to the courtrooms many months after it has been used and abused by the local press. The interesting part is that the General Prosecutor cited the Internal Penal Code and the Press and Publication Law in his indictment.

The prosecutor referred to an interview *Shihani* had published in June with Dr. Abbadi in which he repeated an earlier call of his that the government should confiscate at least 51 percent of the property of Palestinians living in Jordan. Dr. Abbadi repeatedly talked in his columns about his fear that "true" Jordanians were becoming a stateless and powerless minority in their own country. His definition of a true Jordanian goes like this: Any Arab or Muslim of Ottoman parents who normally resided in Jordan before 25 May 1946.

That definition excludes all Jordanian citizens who came from Palestine in 1948 and 1967, namely refugees and the displaced, and who today make up more than half of the population. Dr. Abbadi's extremist views are not thought to have won many supporters or friends. His opponents include some well known East Bank Jordanians. The legal case, brought by Mr. Habawal in his person as a citizen, should attract attention. If the case is not dismissed for some legal or technical reason, it promises to constitute a landmark in the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship. Worse still, if Dr. Abbadi was acquitted then the so-called Jordanian Likud (ultra right individuals whose line of thinking converge occasionally with that of Dr. Abbadi) will have a field day.

What makes the issue interesting is that Mr. Habawal did not file a case against *Shihani* and its editors. But since the prosecutor has cited violations of the press law, the newspaper became involved. The irony is that Dr. Abbadi's interview was openly hostile towards Dr. Abbadi and his ideas. Does that count in *Shihani's* favor? May be.

But *Shihani* had allowed Dr. Abbadi a weekly space for his ideas for many years before it finally decided to pull out the plug. Not to worry, Dr. Abbadi soon found home in *Al Hadath* and *Al Bilad*.

Palestinians savor Olympic competition

Continued from page 1

did come to Atlanta, however, say they have discovered the virtues of reconciliation with the state of Israel, a country they believe to be a repressive force nearly all of their lives.

"We've been sharing meals together, trading pins, even talking about how to improve our running techniques," Maracheel said. "We all realize that we are neighbors and we should learn to live in real peace."

Even though he runs his event, the 10,000 meters, about three minutes slower than the world's best, Maracheel has blossomed into Palestine's greatest sports hero through a training regimen that would test the patience and endurance of anyone.

He would run 12 miles a day from his Gaza home to the Israeli checkpoint where a bus would transport him to a job cultivating flowers in a greenhouse. When the Palestinian uprising broke out in 1987 to protest two decades of occupation, he found himself caught in crossfire one day and his arm was nearly shattered by a Israeli bullet.

Despite such travails, he says he is willing to abandon old resentments if peace can be achieved based on mutual respect. "That is the best thing about athletes, we all respect one another because of what we have gone through to get where we are," Maracheel said. "We just need to carry that view over into real life."



● Prime Minister Abdel Karim Kabariti listens to members of the opposition as he enters the Lower House of Parliament which officially began its extraordinary session last Sunday. (See front page story).

Mr Mejhem Al Kheraisha of the Jordanian National Front 'Anybody who wishes to express his point of view must put the country's interests first'

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Mejhem Al Kheraisha, general secretary of the centrist Jordanian National Coalition Party (JNCP), is the president of the Jordanian National Front, an umbrella organization of four centrist parties, JNCP, Al Watan, Al Yaqadha, Progress and Justice. He talked to *The Star's* Raed Al Abed about this party, national unity and the bread issue. Excerpts follow:

Are you pushing towards political integration between the four parties?

We are making every effort to achieve the final goal, the unity of these parties under the present Jordanian National Front. It is true that the front was founded three years ago, however, early this year we substantially reviewed its charter, and we assigned special committees for that purpose. One of these committees is organizational which aims at consolidating the agendas of the parties in one program. This step will be the basis for complete integration.

We are seeking to hold a general meeting for all members of the four parties. Probably by the end of this year we will reach the integration stage. We definitely believe in the necessity to achieve unity, which will be a step to a further goal: unity of all centrist parties in the country.

So you are aiming at widening the membership of the front?

There are extensive efforts. We want to unite six parties within the front, four of which are already involved, and we hope to add Al Wahdani and Al Jamaher parties. We are also holding talks with Al Wa'd and Ahd parties, we hope to succeed in uniting them in one centrist and moderate party, hopefully by the end of this year, too.

The front released a strongly-worded statement opposing the government's plan to hike the prices of bread. The tone of the statement was almost similar to that of the opposition parties. Is this true regarding the bread issue at least?

National issues are discussed in the higher leadership of the front and its executive committee. We are parties which are built on programs and not on ideologies.

Accordingly, our goal is people's concerns. Our goal is to bring the message of the people across to the government in a correct way.

Concerning the issue of bread, we released a statement as you mentioned. But till now we view the stand of the government as convincing, taking

the fact that the prices of bread are over subsidized. Taking into consideration that our country is a non grain producer, we are also not an oil producer country.

In Syria for instance, the price of a kilogram of bread is between 250-300 fils (Jordan currency), the gasoline in Syria is much more expensive than here, despite the fact that Syria is an oil-producer country.

Our stand towards the government is based on the logic of numbers and facts about the situation of the country.

We hope that the increase of bread prices will come about gradually, not through a rapid jump. A triple increase, as it is the intention, would be very serious.

However, we feel comfortable as long as the government is working on a mechanism to support the poor.

The opposition parties have their own point of view, which we respect; we may agree with them and we may not.

At the same time we agree with the government if we find its position convincing, and vice versa.

We take into our consideration the country's economic situation, the IMF and the World Bank, and the dinar exchange rate.

We have to take all the internal and external factors when we discuss the reasons behind the government's intention to increase prices, particularly bread.

We disagree with the opposition in raising the slogan "We protest" till we find alternatives.

Do you think that the Kabarti government is facing serious economic and political crises?

Since the establishment of Jordan, I believe that governments have existed within the economic and political situation of the country that exists at the time.

These crises are not a result of the qualified or unqualified ministerial team, but it is the local, regional and international conditions which impose their consequences on the Kingdom. So it has been hard for any government to deal with these factors without facing difficulties.

Taking into consideration the economic situation of Jordan and the peace treaty with Israel, don't forget the no peace, no



Al Kheraisha

war situation that existed before. The prerequisites of that era, the economic and military sides, created an extraordinary conditions which made Jordan suffer.

The recent government is not different from the previous ones. It is a continuation of successive governments. This government is distinguished from others, as it lives in the peace era and is facing a very difficult economic situation. I believe the government is bravely confronting these difficulties, through bold decisions, something the previous governments could not do.

In the light of the radical stands of the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, how do you see the future of the peace process?

There is no doubt that the peace process is facing a real crisis due to the last Israeli elections which brought the radical religious parties to power.

This fact has shaken Israeli credibility towards peace, particularly Netanyahu's "Nos" concerning Jerusalem, refugees, the Palestinian state, Golan Heights ... These issues are substantial; peace will not last without solving them.

We hope that this policy of "Nos" will be limited to the electoral slogans and the Israeli government will overcome such policies.

The peace treaties which were signed are an international obligation. The world insists on the continuation of the peace process.

The Arab countries did their best in their last summit in Cairo, when they agreed on the option of peace as a strategic goal for the Arabs, so Israel, too, should take peace as a strategic choice for the future, not security.

In this regard how do you view the official stand?

I believe that the Jordanian position is very balanced and

flexible which is necessary in this stage. We should not act nervously till we see what exactly the Israeli government wants. We feel there are improvements in the Israeli stands during the visit of Netanyahu to Cairo and particularly the meeting between Israeli foreign minister David Levy with Yasser Arafat; such a meeting was rejected during the Israeli election campaign.

Peace should be an Israeli quest before it is an Arab one, because Israel should be the one who seeks peace.

How do you feel about some articles which undermine national unity of the country? Do you think that democracy gives anybody the right to talk about such issues?

All the writings should be responsible; democracy, the freedom of the press and that of expression are holy rights preserved by the Constitution. These rights should be practiced within the principles of the country, we believe the country's interests come first. Anybody who wishes to express his point of view must put the country's interests first.

National unity is holy, whoever tries to break through this redline must be reminded that national unity is the cause of the country and the cause of citizens.

Freedom means responsibility which is based on the right of the country as prior to the right of persons, and the right of citizens as prior to the right of individuals.

There are some who violate national unity and they have to be stopped.

How do you evaluate the performance of the Parliament in the general issues which were discussed under its dome?

I hoped to see a better performance for Parliament. No doubt that the deputies gave all they had, and offered many services, but our hopes were bigger than their performance.

Point of order

By Raed Al Abed

A curse called Tawjihi

The General Secondary Certificate Exam (Tawjihi) turned education from a process of civilization into a nightmare. The sorrowful results express how backward the educational system is in the country.

For the past 10 years the Tawjihi success rate has been below average. This year, too, this rate has continued to deteriorate, only 46.7 percent of the 96,888 students that took the exam passed. Unfortunately, those who plan the future of our kids in the Ministry of Education do not try to scratch their heads to find an exit out of these failures. We feel it is natural for the Minister Muntaher Al Masri to announce such despondent results, like it is natural to drive 55,000 students to the streets!

We cannot put the blame on our kids, simply, because they are supposed to receive the proper education, and to receive the proper care from qualified teachers. We feel that these basics are not given enough attention. Schools are still continuing with archaic methods. The Ottoman ways of teaching still dominate.

Changing curricula is one good move, but in all honesty, there should be a revolution in the educational system, one which could push up the results of Tawjihi exams into respectable averages.

There are many negative practices going on, which reflect themselves on education. The major problem is that of rote learning. Students are taught to memorize rather than search for information, there is no analysis involved other than reaching for the textbook. This means that the majority is not prepared to face any hard questions, and in general, those who design the Tawjihi exams do not take this fact into consideration.

Teachers do not have the proper income, and are not devoting enough time to their schools and their students. Most of the teachers' concern is those student who take private lessons or in educational centers, where teachers find it an easy way to earn a respectable income. Tawjihi guide books are another way for some teachers to exploit students.

Tawjihi pupils are victims of their schools and the general educational policy. They live a whole school year under stress. For students, Tawjihi is the future, if one fails he faces a bleak future. Our kids are the hardest readers in the world, they spend more than 18 hours within closed doors, they isolate themselves from the outside world. Of course, such atmosphere reflects negatively on their personality. At the end, tragedy takes place!

Sadly, students who fail in one subject and have the right to re-sit have to wait for one whole school year before they get another chance and everything remains at risk.

We do not underestimate the educational sector in this country. But we believe that the issue of low rates of success threatens the future of a whole generation, and force the young to abstain from education. Therefore, the case of the Tawjihi exam as a fate of a pupil needs to be changed, methods of education should be reviewed. The government has to be generous with education and responsive to its needs.

Jordanian envoy expresses optimism about peace process

By Emile S. Siman

WASHINGTON—Jordan's envoy to the United States expressed optimism that the Middle East peace process will pull through in the wake of the election of Benjamin Netanyahu and his Likud-led alliance, saying, "the door is still open," and "what we need is a more intensified dialogue" between the parties.

The ambassador, Fayez Tarawneh, was speaking to a group of foreign journalists at a briefing sponsored by the Washington-based Foreign Correspondents Association 18 July. He responded to a number of questions dealing mainly with Israeli-Arab relations and the peace process.

Tarawneh said that Jordan is "affected by ambiguities and uncertainty," especially those relating to the Palestinian issue, a reference to the Israeli prime minister's positions on several Palestinian-Israeli questions, despite his avowed adherence to all agreements concluded between his predecessor and the Palestinian Authority.

The ambassador said, nonetheless, that the "dividends and fruits of peace" will contribute to "the improvement in the quality of life of the Jordanians."

He also hailed the recent Arab summit, saying that for the first time "there is an Arab declaration that peace is a strategic option" and called it a "message of peace" and a "real development." He emphasized that UN Security Resolutions 242 and 338 remain the basis of reference for a future peace settlement, but noted that security is an underpinning of that peace based on return of land.

There are three "pillars," he maintained, and these are peace, land and security, and their order is subject to negotiations. If there is to be peace with security, then land should be a basic ingredient. Invoking a precept of the United Nations Charter, Tarawneh said territory cannot be acquired by war or force.

The ambassador expressed optimism because there is "a commitment to [the peace] process and all the achievements of this process," adding that the final status issues will be based on Resolution 242. He also downplayed Netanyahu's recent preconditions regarding the Golan Heights and Jerusalem saying, "the door should not be closed" based on Netanyahu's recent positions, since, he opined, "we are not sure" whether they are "the maximalist or final positions" of the Israeli government.

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LURIE'S WORLD



Our Say...

Reform starts at home

AS THE government engages in a lengthy study of the mechanisms by which it will deliver cash compensations to its citizens once it removes bread subsidies, deputies and opposition parties gather efforts to mobilize the public against the intended moves.

The confrontation over bread subsidies, and indeed any form of subsidy, is of the classic kind. Governments feel they can no longer shoulder the increasing burden of free or heavily subsidized commodities, while the public, urged to move by political parties and popular organizations, expresses its frustration over the removal of what it now considers as a birthright. The issue of removing subsidies, necessitated by economic reforms and adjustments, becomes a political bombshell, putting governments on the defensive. Suddenly they are inundated with charges of mismanagement, corruption, submission to foreign parties, conspiracy against the havenots etc.

But the truth lies not in the fact that governments are usually mismanaged, not immune from corruption and are easily submissive to the demands of international creditors, but elsewhere. The reality that citizens have grown accustomed to their dependency on governments: large, overburdened, slow moving and extravagant bureaucracies. This dependency is what marks governments in the Arab world today. Ironically, this dependency does not differ from a rich country, like those in the oil-rich Gulf, to poorer ones, like those in the Levant and the Arab Maghreb.

The rise and fall of the welfare state is the biggest story all over the world today. There are examples to be studied in Europe, America and South East Asia. Big governments tend to be bad governments, suffering from imbalance budgets, huge public and foreign debts, corruption and mismanagement. They create overburdened social security systems, ailing national health programs and economies that suffer from weak growth rates, labor conflicts, high unemployment and others.

There are no secret recipes for success. But smaller governments tend to be more efficient. The road to economic reform is fraught with social upheavals and while the bread issue might be unique to the Arab world, other parts of the world have seen problems of a similar sort over the price of basic commodities, taxes and social services. In America, it is the deficit, health care and social security. In France, it is over taxes and privatization, in Germany it is over unemployment.

Our government must look beyond the issue of bread. We know and it knows that economic reform will require more painful cuts in public spending along the way. Many people will be hurt, if not over bread then it is over something else.

That's why the process of reform must be a continuous one. It must not come in sudden bursts. Many people wonder why the government did not embark on a medium-term reduction of subsidies over the years, by raising the price of bread by 10 or 20 percent every two years until the price can be floated with little damage.

On the other hand, reform must start at home and by that we mean inside the government. For people to believe in the doctor they must see him trying a sip of his own medicine. ■

Mubarak says that no peace without Golan Heights

CAIRO—At their meeting, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu turned to the subject of Syria, whose peace negotiations with Israel have stalled over the fate of the Golan Heights.

Mindful that Netanyahu has publicly vowed to maintain Israeli control over the Golan, Mubarak chose his words with care. "I didn't want to push him," Mubarak recalled Sunday. "I told him, 'I don't want any answer from you.'"

But Mubarak said his message to Netanyahu was clear. "I told him, 'Look, my point of view (is) that Syria would never sign any peace treaty unless they take back their territory,'" he recalled.

Mubarak's measured comments on Syria were typical of what he said as his approach to the new Israeli prime minister, whose declarations on Middle East peace negotiations have alarmed the Arab world. As the first Arab country to make peace with Israel, Egypt is heavily invested in the idea of Arab-Israeli peace, and Mubarak is eager to avoid a rupture with Israel's new government.

The Egyptian president offered new details of his private, two-hour conversation with Netanyahu. The two had never met and their first encounter has been the focus of intense interest and speculation throughout the Arab world. Mubarak travels on Sunday to Washington, where he will share his first impressions of Netanyahu with President Clinton, among others.

Mubarak said he warned the Israeli leader of dire consequences if Israel does not take concrete steps toward a territorial settlement that satisfies the Palestinians and Syria.

"It will be very dangerous," Mubarak said. "I told him, 'Look, if you are going to look for the security first, you will reach nowhere, and terrorism will continue.' ... I had the impression he understood that."

When asked whether he outlined a timetable for progress in negotiations, Mubarak replied, "I cannot say one month, two months, three months." But, he added, "by the end of this year we should make some kind of progress. The sooner the better." ■

Dole is qualified but is he politically naive?

By Carrie Nelle Moye
Star US Correspondent

NO DOUBT Bob Dole is a talented, effective politician. He has accomplished much.

But it is almost incomprehensible that his campaign strategy seems to be hindering rather than helping him.

First it was a number of shoot-from-the-hip ridiculous statements crowned by his assertion that cigarettes were not really harmful additives. And that besides, milk was harmful to some people as were any number of other foods.

Next, after having resigned his seat in the Senate so that he might truly ignite his campaign, he has come up with virtually nothing, particularly a positive economic policy—which the recent gathering of Republican governors has painfully pointed out. And of course he did not attend the NAACP convention, giving reasons that leaked like a sieve.

His most recent snafu, and one that hit this columnist dead center, was in an open statement he made directly into news microphones. In defending the charge that his campaign lacked the funds to become appreciably productive, Dole replied that this was not entirely true and that in fact he himself had signed a lot of letters that were bringing in very large sums of money. Not a very tactful thing to say, particularly to those persons who had received such a letter.

You guessed it: I am one of the recipients. At first when I took the envelope from the box, I was struck that it was addressed to me in my legal name with my married name appended. Only neighbors and those who know me well know my married name. Secondly, the return address had only "Bob Dole" on the front, with the Republican Committee address on the back. For me? Junk mail perhaps? I did not think so, as the stationery was of good quality.

I could not imagine nor wait to see what was coming to me from the collective them. As I began reading, I kept looking for the punch line. But no, it was legitimate. On "behalf of Senator Connie Mack" (me?) I had been nominated for membership to the Chairman's Advisory Board and was hereby invited to the National Republican Convention in San Diego, between 11-15 August.

What was the catch? The letter continued that I would have "full guest delegate privileges at the Convention, including reserved seating, as well as an active schedule of members-only functions." Me?!

I would have a reserved/assigned seat and the proper badges to allow me into all official functions, plus additional ones specifically for the members of the Chairman's Advisory Board. Where was the catch? The rest of the letter was perfectly legitimate and I

was equally amazed.

This represented a serious question of ethics to me. On the one hand, never have I been invited to a national political function as a bona fide official representative. But wouldn't I feel like a fox in the hen-house? Frankly, I like Dole, but usually we are at opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to political matters. He, the conservative, is to the right of me, the moderate.

So serious a question was this to me that I asked the advice of several colleagues.

General consensus was that it would be perfectly acceptable so long as anything I wrote from the Convention would be prefaced with a statement of how I came to be there. Fair enough. On the "P.S." of my letter there was an "800" number for me to

call if I wished to have further details. Naturally I did. My first question was who on earth had nominated me. The answer was a very diplomatic, "Someone has noticed you in the community..."

The articulate young man with whom I was speaking went on to verify all the privileges et cetera I would have, noting that post Convention we (the Advisory Committee members) would meet in Washington about five times a year.

But where was the catch? Following his last statement I asked the rhetorical question, "All at my own expense, I suppose." To that he replied, "Oh yes. And maybe I should tell you that there is a \$5,000 membership fee."

So... The catch at last. It really did not bother me very much because as everyone knows, if it sounds too good to be true... Additionally, everyone also knows that all's fair in love, war and politics. But when I saw Presidential Contender Dole speak the words that he had signed letters that were bringing in a large sum of money, I was a bit incensed.

We all know shenanigans happen: we all know it is not difficult to be suckered into something. But most of us prefer to think that there is a more substantial reason behind being selected for something, especially something so important as officially attending a national political convention.

Of course the most cynical persons will say very quickly that elections have become a matter of money anyway. But I continue to believe that the majority of United States citizens still feel that with effort they can contribute talents rather than money and exert a degree of influence upon what we as a nation are doing. But ex-Senator Bob Dole was bluntly truthful. He was signing letters to bring in money. No mention was made of receiving thoughtful in-put or trying to gather groups for brain-storming sessions. Just money.

Dole is too canny a politician to make such a blatant statement. Yet, so very many of our politicians have foot-in-mouth disease. ■



Full-Time Presidential Runner BOB DOLE

Why the West fears Islam

The enemy within

Tonnetta Oubari

WHEN ONE examines the West's fear of Islam, and tries to relate it to the reasons usually given—Muslim fundamentalism, militancy, radicalism, terrorism, totalitarianism—it is difficult, if not impossible, to justify this fear on the basis of reasons given.

One has to believe, however, given all the facts and expertise available to the West, that the fear has to be rational. What is this fear that causes enemies of the Muslim world to play subtly on the theme of the Crusades in order to demonize Islam and Muslims?

Let us first examine what it is, not before we draw our conclusion as to the real reason why the West fears Islam. The fear of Muslim fundamentalism, militancy, radicalism, terrorism, totalitarianism, and the West's discovery of the "rogue states," appeared quite conveniently with the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Western governments, and particularly the US, had to either undergo massive shifts in spending, a painful and unwelcome prospect for the defense establishment, or find new justification for continuing high levels of military expenditures.

The International Institute for Strategic Studies calculates that the \$262 billion US defense budget accounts for about 37 percent of global military expenditures. Russia, Japan, and China each will spend about \$80 billion, \$42 billion, and \$7 billion. The six "rogue states"—Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, North Korea—have a combined annual military budget of \$15 billion.

According to Asimov's *Chronology of the World*, at one stage in its history, the then military power, England, spent only twice as much as the next two biggest spenders combined (a novel way to introduce competition and efficiency in the defense sector).

Given the paltry expenditures of all the "rogue states" combined, even after correcting for differences in costs, one has to believe that either the Western military sector is several or-

ders of magnitude less efficient than that of the rogue states, or that the "rogue states" are no match, militarily, for the West. Muslim terrorists should not be a major fear.

Far more acts of terrorism and violent crime in the US, according to government statistics, are committed by non-Muslims than Muslims. And if Muslims do pose a terrorist threat to the US, one hears little discussion of what it is that the terrorists really want.

Perhaps, all they want is for the West to stop interfering in their countries, in ways that we would never tolerate in the US. Islamic totalitarianism, an oxymoron to anyone with even a

who believe in the one God, and Jews, Christians, and others are Muslims.

Fundamentalism is defined in terms of Christian thinking. There is no parallel in Islam which stresses the use of reason and logic. Absent a definition, the label Islamic fundamentalism serves only to obscure issues, rather than to resolve them. Meanwhile, the Christian Coalition, and the Zionists and their biblical claim to Palestine appear fundamentalist to many yet both are courted by US politicians, and not viewed as a threat.

One can go on eliminating Western arguments against Islam and Muslims. Eventually,

"... We have about 50 percent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3% of its population... Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity... To do so, we will have to dispense with all sentimentality... We should cease to talk about vague and...unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of living standards, and democratization."

rudimentary knowledge of Islam, should not be a Western concern.

A Muslim ruler may be totalitarian, but then his rule would not be Islamic. Furthermore, the Western record on supporting totalitarian Muslim regimes—Iran under the Shah, Iraq before the Gulf War—and doing business with non-democratic regimes—China, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia—speaks for itself.

As for Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic law is based upon the Quran, examples and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, analogical deduction, consensus among the learned, and individual reasoning. Strict interpretation of the Prophet's words leads to the conclusion that Islam is the religion of all

one has to ask, what then is the source of the West's fear of Islam and Muslims? The late Marshall G. S. Hodgson, in *Revolutions and the World History*, states: "Islam's conscious hopes for a godly world order represent one of the most remarkable undertakings in world history and because its less self-conscious general cultural heritage is laden with human values." Muslims see the West beset with broken families, violent crime, drugs. They see a society divided by race, religion, and huge disparities in income. They long for a peaceful life in which they may provide for the basic needs of their families, and enjoy the respect due to all mankind regardless of their race, religion, position, or wealth.

These Muslims see their goals for a more just and compassionate society thwarted by a corrupt Muslim elite whose primary purpose in life appears to be the accumulation of wealth and power, regardless of the cost to their fellow human beings.

They see these elites, who govern not by consensus as Islam prescribes, permitting outside powers to exploit their country while they derive few benefits, and find themselves subordinated by Western influences driving them down the troubled road taken by the West. They see few opportunities to earn a living because most opportunities are withheld from the elites and their sycophants. And they see these elites remaining silent when their faith, which is about all they have left, is denigrated in the propaganda which serves to maintain these elites.

These Muslim elites' natural allies are the defense establishment and the neoconservatives. Islam's mandate for justice and compassion opposes the primary objective of these neoconservatives who seek to follow policies outlined in 1948 by "the leading dove and peace prize winner" Mr. George Kennan, for the US Department of State. In his top secret Policy Planning Study 23 Mr. Kennan stated in part:

"... We have about 50 percent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3% of its population... Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity... To do so, we will have to dispense with all sentimentality... We should cease to talk about vague and...unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of living standards, and democratization."

To avoid exposure, these neoconservatives and their allies in the defense establishment, spurred by the enemy within, divert attention by demonizing Islam and Muslims, thereby fanning the fires of bigotry and raising unrealistic fears among the people of the West. ■

Netanyahu Travelling

AFTER HIS return from Washington, where Mr Netanyahu spelled out his government's position to an increasingly immobile and elections-bound American administration, he turned his attention to Egypt, the first Arab country to break the taboo and sign peace with Israel.

Of course, the visit of the Israeli prime minister to Cairo, was not to reestablish a historical precedent. It was due to the fact that Egypt has been playing an important intermediary role with Syria and the Palestinians in their negotiations with Israel.

The recent Egyptian rumblings regarding his pronouncements on peace increased the urgency for a Cairo visit. But, what actually has taken place in the Egyptian-Israeli talks is plenty of candor and mutual appreciation.

It seems that the Likud leader is more conciliatory in private, than his public statements would lead us to believe, that is of course if one can ever pin Mr Netanyahu to any firm position in the myriad of mercurial and elusive policy declarations.

His next stop is expected to be Amman where it is not scepticism that he will be met with but concern about the peace process. But what is it that Mr Netanyahu can tell the Jordanians, which is different from what he told the Americans and Egyptians?

Clearly, it might be little difficult at this early stage of his career to force the Israeli premier beyond the usual statements of rhetoric, but Jordan has to tell Mr Netanyahu what it expects from its co-signatory.

The Israelis can be as elusive as they like. But Jordan must decide on how it will proceed in the next stage of peace building, and inform the Israelis, frankly of the negative elements in their approach about a lasting peace.

Above all, Jordan must utilize all its diplomatic skills to secure the interests of the Kingdom above and before all other considerations. Our Syrian and Palestinian brothers have their own independent concerns from our particular peace agreement with Israel. But just as multilateral negotiations are not an adequate substitute for bilateral ones, the same criterion stands for the fact that the bilateral agreement with Israel is not an adequate substitute for comprehensive peace.

Jordan will have to activate its most important role to play the final achievement of a peace settlement for all. Undoubtedly, Jordan has affirmed its support for the creation of an independent Palestinian state on an independent capital; it also supports wholeheartedly the return of the Golan Heights to Syria.

But Jordan cannot sit on its laurels and behave as if everything has been accomplished. The UN resolutions regarding the Palestinian question are still a sad reminder that the Palestinian people are still refugees, and their occupied lands are still Jordanian Occupied Territories.

Albeit, life has moved on since those days, but still, the Madrid legitimacy is still built on those resolutions. How are such technicalities to be resolved if Jordan allows itself to be bypassed in any comprehensive peace formula?

Mr Netanyahu understands well Palestinian demands for their national aspirations. But he must understand that Jordan is the most important in the peace trilateral involving the Palestinians, Israel, and Jordan.

Peace is not just about property and real estate, though when negotiating for territorial sovereignty inevitably the issues are reduced to that. A gentle reminder, however, is the question of the holy shrines which has still to be determined by all concerned parties; most of all Jordan. ■

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Business
scene

The Jordanian Dead Sea Salt Industries Co., distributed JD 1,197 million of its profits for 1995. It is circulating JD 814,1 thousand to strengthen its financial position. The company was established in 1994 at a paid-up capital of JD 60 million to exploit salts from the Dead Sea.

Japan is expected to offer Jordan \$90 million loans at favourable conditions, sources at the donor countries stated in their last meeting at Paris. Donor states are following World Bank recommendations which is pleased with the performance of the Jordanian economy. Jordan has now a healthy balance of payment, a decline in inflation and lower deficit. However, the jobless ratio is still at 15%.

"Ready Mix Concrete," a well-known British company established in 1934, is to build the first mix concrete plant in Jordan called "Al Ramz for Concrete Industries," at Al Migabline. German technology was installed to monitor the rate of the concrete mix in the plant through computerized equipment. The Ready Mix Concrete Co., has more than 70 years of experience and 17 branches all over the world. Its plant in Amman will be number 18. Its total sales for 1995 were about \$7 billion.

Sources at the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) said that the Bank had financed projects to the tune of 143 loans with JD 20.93 million in 1995. However, these loans were down by 2.9% compared with 1994. The IDB attributed this fall to the economic conditions and the state of anxiety and caution as well as new restrictions adopted by the Bank on limiting loans to 20% for investment projects. In 1995, total finances for industrial projects were JD 15.45 million, JD 4.9 million for tourism projects and JD 58,000 for services. By the end of 1995, total loans approved by the Bank since its foundation reached 3305 valued at JD 362.09 million. Among these loans, 24 were cancelled (at JD 4.2 million) and other were cut.

Foreign
Exchange

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US \$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.0994	1.1049
DM	0.4677	0.4700
SR	0.5666	0.5694
FRF	0.1380	0.1387
YEN (100)	0.6424	0.6456
DKK	0.4165	0.4186
LIT (100)	0.8461	0.8463

Jordan Bank's performance in 1995
Monetary stability, profits and mergers

AMMAN (Star)—The performance of banks in this country was very healthy in 1995. They recorded high profits. The top institutions were the Arab Bank, Cairo-Amman Bank and the Housing Bank.

Although, the Central Bank of Jordan rose interest rates to support monetary stability and restrain credit expansion of commercial banks, these banks have achieved good results for their shareholders.

In 1995, the Central Bank issued deposit certificates of JD 320 million at an interest rate of 9.25%-9.75% in a bid to absorb liquidity in the domestic market.

On the other hand, the Amman Financial Market suf-

fered from sharp losses as reflected in the bank's investment portfolios, despite the economic growth in 1995 which exceeded 5%.

The Central Bank called Jordanian banks to raise their paid-up capital to JD 20 million by the end of 1997, in order to confront economic and banking challenges of the peace era. Some banks increased rights of their shareholders, and others started to merge in response to the Central Bank requirements.

The year 1995 also witnessed a heated competition between banks to attract deposits and clients. Total assets of Jordanian Banks were up from JD 7528 million in 1994 to JD 8430 million in 1995. Foreign

assets rose from JD 1682 million in 1994 to JD 1883 million in 1995.

Reserves and allocations at Jordanian banks recorded a hike from JD 342 million in 1994 to JD 437 million in 1995.

Deposits of the private sector took the highest share, as they increased from JD 3300 million in 1994 to JD 3538 million in 1995.

The Central Bank pressed clients to liquidate their deposits in foreign currency and cover their loans in the dinar to support foreign assets that form a cover which protects the dinar against other currencies.

As a result, interest rates at some banks reached 15% com-

pared with 10% to 13%.

Some banks offered weekly and monthly awards for saving accounts including cash money, golden casts, cars and electric equipments to attract low-costly deposits.

Jordan National Bank: It was established 40 years ago. In 1995 it made profits of 14% says the JNB director, Abdul Kader Tash. He points out that there is a technical study to merge with the Business Bank. Rights of its shareholders rose by 7.6% to reach JD 38.7 million in 1995. Total budget was up by 6.8% as total assets were JD 424 million.

Branches increased to 34 with seven new offices in Jordan. The bank also re-opened branches in Nablus, Hebron and Ramallah. Its branches in Lebanon recorded a hike in deposits of 14%.

Jordan Arab Investment Bank: Its overall performance was moderate in 1995. It has assets of JD 216 million, but its profits increased slightly from JD 2.64 million in 1994 to JD 2.46 million in 1995.

This year, the bank plans to launch new branches at Aqaba and Petra and increase client's deposits. Its management aims at achieving new profits, developing banking services, increasing the AT systems and training its cadres.

Cairo-Amman Bank: It had its records in 1995 as its profits increased by 31 percent to JD 6.4 million as compared to JD 4.9 million in 1994. Assets rose from JD 426 million to JD 600 million, show-

ing an increase of 40.8. Deposits were up by 43% to reach JD 516 million compared with JD 360 million in 1994.

Mr Khalil Al Talhouni, the Bank's director said that the bank will improve its performance this year due to the implementation of a computerized system linking its branches in Jordan with those in the West Bank and Gaza.

The European Investment Bank had chosen the Cairo-Amman Bank to co-ordinate production projects finance in these Palestinian self-rule areas. These are estimated at Ecu13 million.

Total branches of the bank have increased to 51 (35 in Jordan and 16 in the West Bank and Gaza).

Overall, the banking sector seems to be facing a bright future. However, there are challenges. Two years had passed since the Jordan-Israel peace accord was signed; there is still anxiety in the investment market. Certainly, this had a negative influence on the value of local and foreign investments and thus the bank's performance.

Observers say that Jordanian banks are facing various challenges that are pushing them forward to speed developing banking and financial establishments or to embark on merger strategies in order to raise their capital and provide more liquidity. ■

Prices on AFM stabilize
because of increase in
market activity

AMMAN (Star)—The stock market has not been stable for the previous month. The share indicator has fallen sharply after the 29 May Israeli elections, but last week trading at the Amman Financial Market more or less stabilized and share prices took an upward trend. An atmosphere of confidence and optimism prevailed as evidenced by the high level of activity. Observers say this was because of positive developments in the Jordanian economy as international economic institutions gave Jordan the thumbs up. Soft loans and pledged international projects were well received by traders on the AFM.

The volume of dealings was up by 47% compared with the previous week to reach JD 5.7 million. The share of the Housing Bank and Dar Al Dawa was 35% of this total. Daily dealings averages were JD 1.15 million. The ratio of one transaction was nearly JD 1450. The official price index was up by 2.4% to close at 138.43 points. The bank's index was up by 4.8%, due to a rise in the share price of the Housing Bank which jumped by 66 fils while the share of the Arab Bank was up by JD 4,500 fils.

GoldStar was in the top rank of eight "golden groups" for the week, recording a rise of 27%. This was followed by Al-Mawared Co., Housing Bank, Livestock Co., Pharmaceutical Centre, Pharmaceutical Supplies, United Engineering Co., and Rum Co.

"Golden" is the expression given to companies which register a rise of more than 10%.

On the other hand, some companies recorded a decline. In the top comes Al Ahliyah for Trade Centers which marked a fall of 21.7%. The Central Co., for Commerce also recorded a fall of 16.4%.

Demand on shares of industrial companies was up by 65% of total dealing, followed by the banks and financial companies at 27.9%. Then comes the shares of service companies at 6.7% followed by the insurance sector at 0.4%. ■



Anxiety dominates local market

AMMAN (Star)—Jordanians and the local market are going through an unstable experience which resulted from latest official statements to rise bread prices. If implemented, the bread increase will lead to a new economic dilemma in the market.

People are still awaiting from their deputies to take action. However, sources indicate that the hike will be valid from next month creating a sensitive situation, as prices of other goods will likely rise between 50 percent to a 100 percent.

Almost all foodstuffs that have a flour compound are vanishing from the market shelves since the statements to rise bread prices to 250 fils per kilo were announced. The majority of Jordanian citizens put the blame on those who trade in flour; they are

now hoarding it in expectation of a quick profit.

They are abusing their position to blackmail citizens. Although official sources are warning against any attempt at stocking food commodities, shops and supermarkets are hiding flour. People are appealing to the government to take determined action against violators. The Consumer Protection Society has stated that a sharp increase will emerge after the issue of the bread increase goes into effect. Thus living expenses which are already high, will rise to 18%. The society's chairman, Dr Mohammed Obaidat says "The Jordanian citizen, with his present income, cannot afford the price hikes, which will add to other additional burdens. ■

Regional Bank increase
world interest in area

By Alan Spence

ANYONE LOOKING for new business in the Middle East region's slowly emerging private sector has watched the birth of the Middle East Development Bank (MEDB) with a keen eye.

Some 2,000 international companies attended the multi-lateral institution's conception at the Casablanca Middle East/North Africa (MENA) economic summit in late 1994. This was given a further boost in the Amman Economic Summit that was held in October 1995. And despite a protracted gestation period, many more will be seeking to link into a potentially vast stream of infrastructure-related projects generated during the bank's infancy.

"There is no scarcity of projects," says Gideon Schurr, director of international affairs and external relations at the Bank of Israel, which has played an important bank seat role in getting the MEDB off the ground.

The enthusiasm of the MEDB's most active shareholders to build a new framework for co-operation and private sector activity is based on the need to develop infrastructure, reduce public sector participation and create jobs to underpin a steady middle class peace initiative.

"Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Palestine have submitted large lists of schemes, many of these tied into the region's largest problem, the lack of sufficient water resources," Mr Schurr says.

But for all the demand for capital, just how the MEDB will function remains unclear. "The idea is to create an institution similar to an investment bank, focusing on the private sector and helping to consolidate the privatization process in some Arab countries," Mr

Schurr.

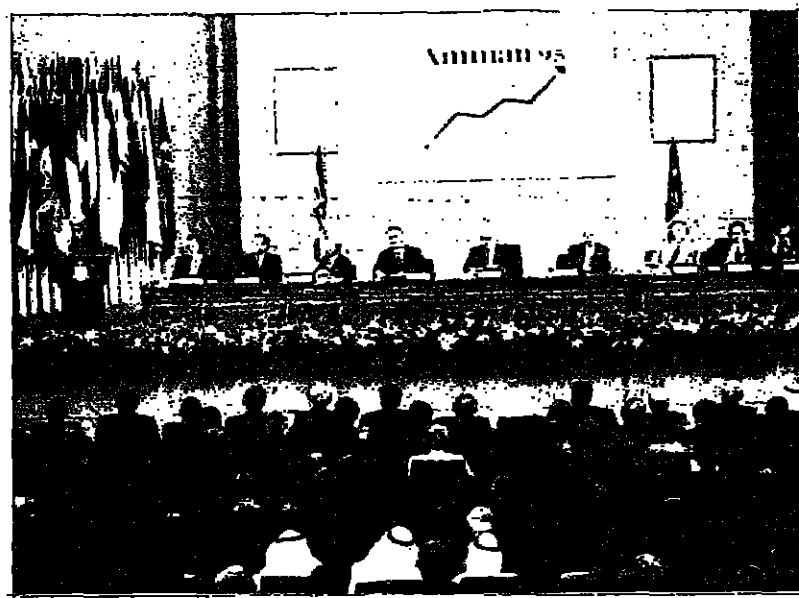
Strong support for the institution—envisioned as a conduit for new sources of private investment using its Triple A-rated borrowing leverage in global capital markets—has been pledged by the US, Japan, Canada, South Korea, Russia, China, Israel and most of its Arab neighbors.

Agreement to participate has also come from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, all of whom hope that the trickle of Maghreb private sector projects led by Morocco's Jori Lastar power station concession will translate into a flood with leverage provided by institutions such as the MEDB.

But most schemes remain on the drawing board while differences remain among shareholders. Not all of the latter have maintained the momentum shown at the Autumn 1995 MENA summit in Amman, which agreed on an institution capitalized at \$5 billion, with and \$1.25 billion paid-up.

But progress has since been made. A late-November meeting in Cairo approved the MEDB's initial articles of association. A 10-member transition team was set up to create the institution's structure and operations, but the team, led by the US, whose 21 percent stake makes it the MEDB's biggest shareholder and gives Washington the right of veto on key issues, has yet to start work.

This is partially due to the



Amman Economic Summit kick starts regional bank

lack of a headquarters in Cairo, where the bank is to be based. Resurgent conflict between Lebanon and Israel has not helped. But arguably, the biggest problem is foot-dragging in the US Congress on approving the \$262 million allocation. Neither has the EU been quick to come up with its share of the cash. To date, fewer than expected commitments from member states have contributed to a shortfall of some 25 percent in subscriptions to the MEDB's capital.

The MEDB's critics argue that sufficient funding sources for the region exist, including facilities to be provided to back the EU's creation of a free trade area in the Mediterranean. Some Ecu4.65 billion has been allocated for this in 1996-2000, with the prospect of a similar level of European investment Bank loans for the region.

Development finance has also poured in from the World Bank, which is increasing its

lending to the MENA region over and above the \$1 billion provided in 1994, and the EIB, which has offered Ecu300 million over the next two years to Gaza and the West Bank and recently extended a \$300 million loan facility for the \$1.3 billion Middle East oil refinery project in Egypt.

The concept of placing more of the area's projects into the private sector is supported by the World Bank's International Finance Corporation where officials say they see the MEDB as a complementary institution, rather than a rival to its won ventures in the MENA region.

Despite concern at the plethora of institutions working to underpin Middle East peace, such are the region's demands that the MEDB could yet play a leading role. ■

Financial Times

New coins offered by
Jordan Central Bank

AMMAN (Star)—New coins were offered by the Jordan Central Bank. These are of one dinar, half dinar and quarter dinar denominations. They join the existing coins and other banknotes that are currently in circulation.

These coins have distinct features: In the case of the one dinar, it is made up of nickel (5.5 percent), zinc (24.5 percent) and copper (70 percent). The coin weighs 12.4 grams, and is 32 millimeter in diameter.

The half dinar weighs six grams, and 29 millimeter in diameter. In the case of the new quarter dinar coin, it weighs 7.5 grams, and 26.5 millimeters in diameter. The half and quarter dinar coins already exist, but the new ones have different inscriptions.

On one side of the coins there is a portrait of HM King Hussein, with the name of "Al Hussein Bin Talal" on the right side, and "Monarch of the Ha-



shemite Kingdom" on the left.

Both are written in Arabic.

On the other side, there is a figure of the denomination in the center surrounded by Islam-

ic carvings, written in English and Arabic together with the Hijri and Gregorian date of issue and "The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan" in English. ■

World Bank investment grow
in Middle East

WASHINGTON—According to the World Bank, new lending commitments by the Bank to the Middle East and North Africa in fiscal year 1996 are up by 63 percent.

World Bank figures show bank disbursements to Middle Eastern and North African countries reached a high of \$1.5 billion in fiscal year 1996 compared to \$1.2 billion in the previous year. New lending commitments from the Bank to these countries totaled about \$1.7 billion in FY96, up from \$999 million in FY95.

The lending figure breakdown shows that the World Bank is adjusting its services to meet the new demands of its member countries at a time of

rapid global changes. In a July 19 press conference at World Bank headquarters in Washington, Kemal Dervis, the Bank's Vice President for the Middle East, reported that the Bank is working closely with clients to meet their needs and smooth their passage into the global economy.

"The last fiscal year has been reasonably successful thanks to the emphasis by the Bank and our partners in the region on implementation issues," Kemal told reporters.

"However, he cautioned, "this is only a start given the region's needs, especially in infrastructure improvement, water scarcity alleviation, and employment generation. Much

more has yet to be done to accelerate growth and help increase investments."

New lending commitments from the World Bank to developing countries worldwide totaled \$21.4 billion in fiscal year 1996, which ended June 30. According to World Bank press reports, those figures include both the market-rate loans made by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the concessional loans made to the world's poorest countries through the International Development Association (IDA). The total compares with \$22.5 billion in FY95 and \$20.8 billion in FY94. ■

MARKET WATCH

20-23 JULY

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY

Amman Investment Bank	6.45
Livestock & Poultry	6.00
United Engineering	5.88

SUNDAY

General Central Storage	5.99
United Engineering	5.36
Middle East Complex	5.33

MONDAY

Middle East Complex	5.06
Arab Paper Industry	3.17
United Saving Bank	2.86

TUESDAY

Arab Insurance	5.00
Arab Aluminium	3.36
Jordan Ceramics	2.99

Jordan Rock Wool Industries

4.59

Universal Seas Insurance

5.00

Alfita Trade Centers

5.17

Arab International Trade

5.13

General Price Pointer

140.680

Trade Volume

1003316

Stock Volume

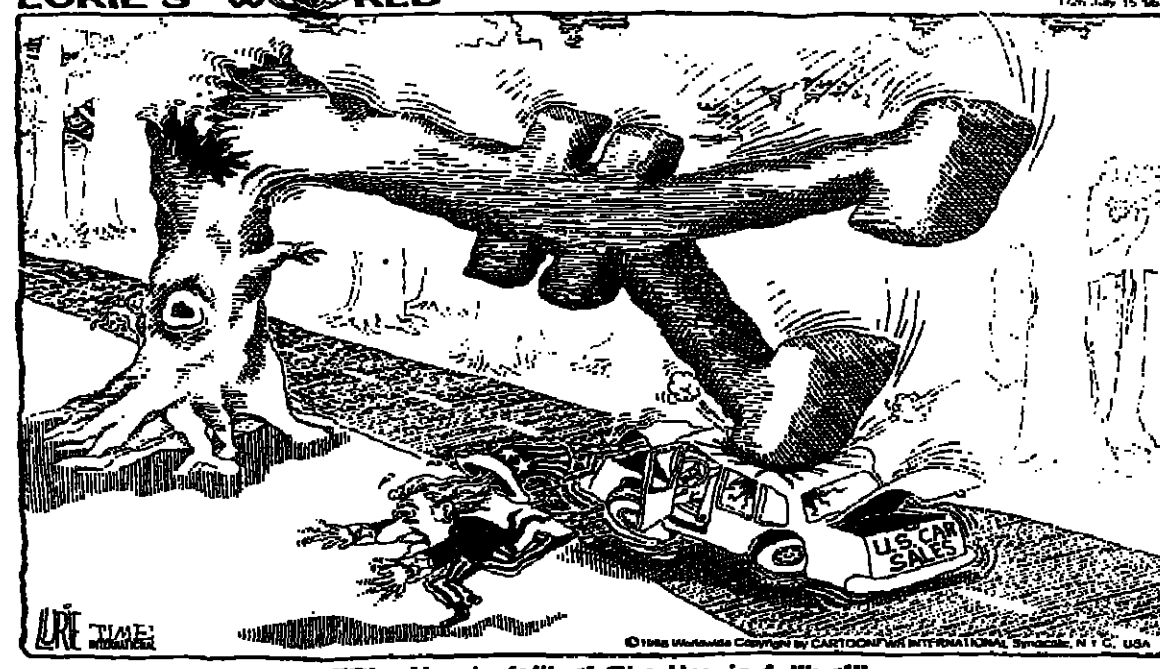
868642

Highest Traded Stocks

Livestock & Poultry	108.755
Livestock & Poultry	120.536
Arab Paper	102.946
Middle East Complex	224.512

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

LURIE'S WORLD



"The Yen is falling! The Yen is falling!"

Palestine Post



Economic unity between Jordan, Palestine and Israel

The former Jordanian prime minister and head of the Jordanian delegation to the peace negotiations, Dr. Abdel Salam Majali, expected the establishment of an economic union between Jordan, Palestine and Israel. If this federation exists, there will be no borders and economic barriers between the three countries. But their political entities won't be changed, Majali added.

This will help create a free trade market that allows transfer of manpower, exchange of skills, expertise and technology among the three countries.

Majali assured that Iraq will certainly play a regional role in the Middle East, although we have no fixed and definite date for this. Comprehensive peace won't be achieved without Iraq, he added. Speaking on the problems facing the economic situations in this country, Dr. Majali said that Jordan is improving and developing its economic establishments. Economic advancement is basic to peace, he said.

Qatar cancels commercial bureau at Tel Aviv

The Qatari Foreign Minister, Sheikh Hamid Bin Jasim Al Thani, called on Israel to re-evaluate its hard-line stance towards the land-for-peace principle. Because of Benjamin Netanyahu's policy, Qatar decided to cancel the inauguration of a Qatari commercial interests bureau in Tel Aviv. Neither is it receiving an Israeli delegation to discuss further trade exchange between Qatar and Israel. Sheikh Hamid assured. Promoting co-operation with Israel now depends on Netanyahu's attitude towards the peace process, Sheikh Hamid added.

Health protocol between Jordan and Palestine

A health Co-operation Protocol was signed in Amman recently by the Health Minister, Dr. Aref Al Batayneh, and the Palestinian Health Minister, Dr. Riyadh Al Za'noon.

The agreement stresses the training of technical cadres especially from the Palestinian side; exchange of technical expertise, data and health procedures is especially provided for in the protocol.

Beneficiaries from this protocol are the people of Gaza, the West Bank and Jerusalem (in future), Dr. Al Za'noon said. Cases that require complicated surgery or medical treatment that is not available in Palestine will be taken to Jordanian hospitals as the protocol stipulates.

Furthermore, there are plans to co-operate in drug tests procedures and exporting pharmaceuticals by Jordanian companies.

Jordan-Israeli water committee talks reach a deadlock

In contrast to what was agreed upon in the Jordan-Israel peace accord, Israel is refusing to provide the latter with an additional 50 million cubic metres of water.

The Jordanian-Israeli Water Committee has so far failed to reach an agreement. This issue is still unresolved and is now left to the forthcoming visit by the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to Jordan that is expected on 29 July.

Unsatisfied with Netanyahu economic policy

A recent opinion poll indicated that the majority of Israelis are displeased with the economic policy of their new Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. About 55 percent of the group participating in the poll (515 Jewish) told the *Ma'ariv* daily that they are against Netanyahu's policy. 23 percent were satisfied and 22 percent didn't express an attitude. The Tel Aviv Stock Exchange fell by 20 points since the election of the Likud Prime Minister in the 29 May elections. Last week shares gained four points.

JORDAN Today

TOURISM-CULTURE-ENTERTAINMENT

JULY 1996



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Israel, Hezbollah relive agony of prisoners exchange

By Glenn Frankel
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

JERUSALEM—In a ritual that was both solemn and macabre, Israel last Sunday received the bodies of two of its long-missing soldiers from the Hezbollah guerrilla movement in exchange for the remains of 123 Arab fighters. The Islamic guerrillas also traded captives with Israeli-backed Christian militia forces in southern Lebanon.

An Israeli honor guard greeted a German military plane that brought the coffins containing the bodies of Yusef Fink and Rahamim Alsheikh, captured in 1986, to a military airfield in central Israel shortly after noon. Meanwhile, 17 trucks of the International Committee for the Red Cross ferried 123 coffins from the Israeli-Lebanese border to Kfar Tibnit, a village in southern Lebanon.

The exchange—said to be the biggest involving bodies and prisoners between Israeli and Muslim guerrillas since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982—was overseen

by Bernd Schmidbauer, a top security aide to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who brokered the deal over three tense months. It had the clear backing of Syria, which commands the parts of Lebanon where Hezbollah's command centers and training bases are located, and of Iran, which provides funds and weapons to the group, which is fighting to oust Israeli occupation forces from southern Lebanon.

But while there were expressions of gratitude on both sides, no one suggested that the exchange augured a breakthrough between some of the Middle East's most bitter and longstanding enemies. Israel has held the 170-square-mile swath along its border with Lebanon since withdrawing from other parts of that country in 1985. It considers the territory a buffer zone and insists that withdrawal of its forces could occur only as part of an overall agreement with Hezbollah and its Syrian overseers—which appears distant at best.

Nor was there any word on the fate of Ron Arad, a cap-

tured flight navigator who Israel believes may still be alive, nor on the prospect of his being exchanged for two Israeli-held captives, Hezbollah cleric Abdel Karim Obeid and Islamic militant Mustafa Diriani, both abducted from Lebanon by Israeli commandos.

"We hope it signals a change of attitude on the part of Hezbollah (but) it's too early to say," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told a press conference about last Sunday's exchange. "There is no question about an Iranian decision to go ahead with this particular exchange. Whether that signifies a broader change I cannot say."

Schmidbauer expressed optimism that further exchanges could take place. "I'm sure we can achieve much if we have an opportunity to build trust with the partners," he told reporters here. But he said it would take "goodwill on both sides to get results."

Families on both sides of the border reacted with a combination of deep sadness that



A Lebanese girl hugs her brother who returned from an Israeli prison camp

their worst fears were finally confirmed and relief that their long wait was over. "We had hoped that maybe, by some sort of miracle, that it was not right," Yusef Fink's mother, Hadassah Fink, told the Associated Press. "Now it is very final and we cannot pretend anymore."

In Kfar Tibnit relatives of the dead fighters gathered among turbaned clerics and guerrillas to receive the convey of coffins. "My wounds were opened anew," the mother of Mahmoud Haj Ali, killed two years ago, told *Reuters*. "But at least he is back and we will bury him near our house."

Fink and Alsheikh, then both 20, were captured in an ambush of a military convoy by Hezbollah guerrillas on Feb. 17, 1986, during a patrol in the Israeli-occupied portion of Lebanon. After soldiers recovered their bullet-riddled jeep, Israeli officials presumed the two had been wounded in the attack. But whether they died from wounds they suffered or were killed by their captors has never been clear. Israel received proof of their death in 1991.

Besides the return of Arad, Israel wants the remains of three soldiers captured and presumed killed during the

first days of the 1982 invasion.

For years, Israel has interred the bodies of Hezbollah guerrillas in numbered graves in a site in northern Israel. Over the weekend bulldozers worked steadily at the cemetery, disinterring the metal coffins and depositing them in awaiting trucks.

Along with the dead came the living: Hezbollah freed 17 members of the Israeli-sponsored South Lebanon Army (SLA), while the SLA released 45 prisoners from the notorious Khiam prison it operates in the Israeli-held territory. The SLA also delivered the remains of eight

Despite his past, Idi Amin lives free in Saudi Arabia



Amin

they were summarily dismissed, first by the president's son, and later by a threatening security guard, who promised trouble if they reappeared.

"This is the end," said a voice over the loudspeaker outside Amin's home. "He's not here."

Later, a I am call from an aide named Abdullah offered the information that Amin was away, in the capital city of Riyadh.

One of the few recent interviews Amin did give, appearing in the *Sunday Telegraph* in England three years ago, was with a former foreign correspondent who struck up a friendship with Amin in Uganda during his tenure.

It was written during a visit to Jeddah in which the two recollected the good old days when they each ate a "hunk of meat hippo liver" in the Ruwenzori mountains. In Jeddah, the two "mooched around town" in Amin's white Chevrolet Caprice.

Although Amin became a joke in his day—a Hollywood parody of an African dictator—he was, in fact, a deadly dangerous man who brought

pain, devastation and bankruptcy to his own country and his own people. Like many former dictators, including Jean-Claude Duvalier of Haiti, Amin was allowed to leave peacefully by the Ugandan exiles and their Tanzanian supporters who overthrew his regime in 1979.

A guerrilla group, the West Nile Bank Front, is fighting in Uganda against current president Yoweri Museveni. Dozens have been recently killed by the group, which Museveni says is backed by Amin.

Amin has denied any connection, and said in a brief interview with a Ugandan

paper in November that he had little expectation of being granted amnesty to return to Uganda. "It would be ridiculous for the people who keep calling me a buffoon and a dictator to invite me back," he said.

It appears, therefore, that he will stay in Jeddah. ■

Sudan could soon join the oil-rich states

KHARTOUM—Oil in Sudan's Upper Nile area is to start at the end of this month according to sources in the Gulf Petroleum Sudan Company Ltd.

The Secretary in charge of oil prospecting, Gen. Salah Wahbi, told a local daily newspaper that three oil wells in the area will begin lifting the crude.

Wahbi told the *Al Ingath Al-Watani*, that the Adar Yiel field held some 170 million barrels of crude. Up to 60 million barrels of this amount can be drilled by using the conventional methods.

He said at the experimental stage the field will be producing 5,000 barrels of crude per day.

Sudan, he said, was negotiating with five foreign companies for oil prospecting in the country.

He said another five companies have been prospecting since 1993 in the Elgig field in west Sudan, in association with the state-run petroleum company.

The field is expected to produce a minimum of 10,000 barrels of crude per day. He said production could be raised to a maximum of 25,000 barrels per day.

Wahbi said the Wehda oil field, in the

south, has a reserve of 660 million barrels. Of this, 150 million barrels can be extracted at a rate of 25,000 barrels a day.

Production in this field would start by the end of the rainy season, when oil wells would be fully linked to a storage facility, being constructed by the Canadian state petroleum company.

The Wehda (Unity) oil field is the biggest in Sudan. So far, he said, some 19 wells have been sunk there.

Overall, some 45,000 barrels of crude would be pumped daily from these fields when Adar Yiel and Wehda start production.

Sudanese President Omar El Bashir said recently his country spends 80 percent of its export earnings on the importation of petroleum products. This adds up to some 360 million US dollars annually.

Khartoum imported the bulk of its oil from Gulf states until 1990, when this was stopped in reaction to Sudan's support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein when he invaded Kuwait. ■

PANA

Freeh discusses access to detainees in Riyadh

By R. Jeffrey Smith
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

WASHINGTON—FBI Director Louis J. Freeh is in Saudi Arabia to seek US access to several individuals who have been detained by the Saudi government on suspicion of involvement in last month's deadly bombing of a US military housing complex in Dhahran, officials said last Friday.

Freeh's visit—his second in seven days to the kingdom—was provoked by what officials described as rapidly growing FBI frustration over the agency's lack of access to the suspects and its inability to obtain timely and complete information about the bombing investigation from Saudi law enforcement agents.

The officials said Freeh plans to take his complaint directly to King Fahd, a move that reflects a significant escalation of Washington's effort to overcome lingering obstacles to full collaboration between the FBI and its Saudi Arabian counterpart, known as *Mabahith*.

Last week, Freeh and the head of *Mabahith*, Minister of Interior Prince Nayef, reached an unannounced agreement that US and Saudi law enforcement agents would jointly staff a task force to direct the investigation.

One senior US official said that in deference to this arrangement, Saudi officials have cooperated "exhaustively"

in the forensic investigation of bomb fragments at the blast site and have taken many helpful new security precautions—even some that are bound to be irksome to local citizenry.

But Washington is anxious to talk to the suspects, and some officials view Nayef as more of an impediment than an aid to full cooperation in the investigation. It was Nayef who refused a previous US request to interview four Saudis before they were executed for carrying out a November 1995 bombing that killed five Americans in Riyadh, the Saudi capital.

By taking his complaint to Fahd, Freeh hopes to persuade the king to enforce the pledge of full cooperation Fahd made to Secretary of Defense William J. Perry shortly after the 25 June Dhahran bombing, which killed 19 US airmen. US officials said.

"It will send a message to the officers in the field that this has total support behind it. If nothing happened after the last message, now it goes to the top and gets fixed," said one knowledgeable source.

Perry told a Senate committee last week that he found the Saudi government's handling of the US request for cooperation in the Riyadh bombing "unacceptable" and said "I am going to insist" that the country at least turn over any information it obtains from suspects in the Dhahran explosion.

"We cannot accept the prob-

lems we had the last time," Perry said.

US officials conceded, however, that Washington's request for direct access to the suspects could place King Fahd, who suffered a stroke last year and may not be at full strength, in an awkward position.

Prince Nayef is Fahd's brother, and in rejecting the US request for access to suspects in the Riyadh bombing, Nayef's aides had cited a supposed injunction in Islamic law against allowing non-Muslims to interfere in Saudi criminal cases by conducting prison interviews.

US officials—and even some Saudis—considered this argument wholly without merit. But to accept the US request, Fahd must repudiate that interpretation of the law and also rebuke his brother. "It's an important moment," said one senior US official.

According to the accounts of several sources who asked not to be named, Freeh's cause is supported by Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the Saudi ambassador to Washington and a nephew of the king. Bandar arranged for Freeh's visit and appointment with Fahd, and then accompanied him on the trip to Saudi Arabia, the sources said.



Additional support is expected to come from Saudi Prince Turki Al Faisal, a graduate of Georgetown University who has been in charge of the Saudi Directorate of Intelligence—a counterpart to the CIA—since 1977. US officials report that he has consistently supported close ties with the US intelligence community and cooperated fully in counterterrorism activities.

Freeh's trip to discuss obtaining access to the suspects and iron out other wrinkles was initially meant to be secret. But after word leaked out late Friday, FBI spokesman John Collingwood released a

statement confirming that Freeh was visiting again "at the invitation of host government officials for additional discussions regarding the investigation."

Collingwood added that the trip "shows the importance of the investigation to the United States," but said it would be "counterproductive to discuss details while it is underway."

The number of suspects detained by the Saudi government could not be learned, nor could the precise grounds on which they are being held. But they were apparently identified as suspects from photographs that Saudi officials circulated in Dhahran. None has been for-

mally arrested or charged with a crime.

During the investigation into the earlier bombing in Riyadh, Washington was not even informed about the suspects until more than a month after the arrests. Its case for interviewing the four men was initially—and unsuccessfully—pressed by then-US ambassador Raymond Mabus. Freeh and Bandar subsequently made two appointments to discuss the matter in Washington, but both meetings were canceled due to last-minute scheduling conflicts.

Finally, State Department regional and counterterrorism officials met with Bandar to seek his assistance, and the ambassador offered to take the matter up with Fahd during a forthcoming trip to Riyadh. But he was unable to make headway there, and the four accused were beheaded on May 31, while Bandar was still in the country.

US officials said that act denied Washington the opportunity to assess for itself whether—as the Saudi government insisted—the four were the only Saudi citizens directly involved in planning and carrying out the Riyadh bombing. US intelligence officials now suspect that others were also involved, but they are still digesting Saudi records from that investigation. ■

By Jennifer Moorehead

BETHLEHEM—In this Palestinian town, the mood is uneasy. Early in June, residents awakened in the middle of the night to the sound of a heavily-guarded Israeli army bulldozer plowing its way through ancient olive groves.

These are the first steps being taken by the Israelis to build a military road which will define the illegally-expanded municipal limits of Jerusalem. The road will stretch from the settlement of Cilo (west of Bethlehem), cut deep into Bethlehem itself, and end east of Bethlehem in Beit Sahour.

The construction of this road violates the internationally supported Oslo Accords by essentially demarcating the Jerusalem boundary even before the negotiations on Jerusalem have begun. It also marks the first stage in vast new Israeli plans for the northern Bethlehem area, plans which will sap Bethlehem's few remaining resources. Residents have begun to organize against what they see as a coordinated Israeli effort to create a Bethlehem ghetto.

Practically overnight, large areas of the Palestinian town have been incorporated into Jerusalem by a visual boundary: a 30-meter wide path bulldozed through now-devastated olive groves. Jamil Baboun, 74, has seen the last of his land in Bethlehem confiscated for this new border road. "It is in God's hands," he sighs. "But even His hands are no match for Israel's submissiveness. They have taken everything and gotten away with it." Since 1967, over 61 percent of all the Bethlehem-area land (330,231 dunums) has been either annexed when Jerusalem illegally expanded its borders, or confiscated for settlements, bypass (Jewish only) roads, green areas or military zones. Settlements and their connecting bypass roads have encircled Bethlehem and nearby Beit Jala and Beit Sahour. For Bethlehem's dynamic tourist industry, these losses have been devastating.

The town's only hope for a viable economic future is in its lands that lie to the north, as yet undeveloped and largely agricultural. In addition to causing enormous devastation and the loss of 1,500 dunums, this new patrol road de-facto defines the future northern limits of Bethlehem.

The road represents the first step toward separation between the West Bank and Israel, and facili-

itates the construction of an enormous Jewish settlement to be built on the last forested mountain in this area, Jabal Abu Ghneim, which lies to the north of Bethlehem. Although a small percentage of it is owned by Israelis, the majority of the mountain is owned by residents of Um Tuba, Bethlehem and Beit Sahour.

Since Jerusalem unilaterally expanded its municipal boundaries after the 1967 war, landowners have been consistently refused the right to develop the mountain and surrounding land on the pretext that it was protected as a "Green Area." The term "Green Area" was invented by Israel to describe land upon which construction is prohibited—Palestinian land, that is. As soon as it is taken from us, it is suddenly not "green" anymore," says Kamel Issa Danoun, a landowner from Beit Sahour who recently lost land to confiscation. For a Palestinian who owns land in a Green Area, the only alternative is to sell to a Jewish buyer.

Indeed, the word "green" describes this mountain, which hosts a delicate forest ecosystem and is home to several species of rare wildlife and diverse flora and fauna.

For Christians, this is also a holy site: on these "Hills of St. Lucas and St. Marinos" the ruins of 6th century Byzantine and Georgian monasteries can be found, and the site of St. Theodore's Well. Also designated as Green Area are the 7,000 dunums surrounding Abu Ghneim.

This is the area most critical to the development of Bethlehem, as it is the only land left on which Bethlehem can grow; the town is virtually surrounded on every other side by Israeli settlements and roads. "It is a question of heritage," explains

Bethlehem in the year 2000

A case of confiscation by Israel

Israel's development of the Har Homa complex will effectively co-opt Bethlehem's tourist economy, which is still reeling from the effects of the three-year old closure of the West Bank and Gaza

Ghassan Andoni from the Palestinian Rapprochement Center in Beit Sahour.

"People around here own nothing but this land; without it, we lose our livelihood. In this district, we have no more land on which to expand our towns and villages." In 1991, the 1,850 dunums of Abu Ghneim were confiscated for "public use," which meant, in fact, the construction of a Jewish settlement. Both Jewish and Arab residents bitterly contested the confiscation, but Arab landowners were the victims of blatant racism: the confiscation orders specified that their land was to be used for Jewish construction. The planned settlement for this area, appropriately named "Har Homa" or "Mount Wall," will complete the ring of Jewish settlements around the eastern or Arab part of Jerusalem. It is planned to accommodate 6,500 Jewish families, with a projected population of 50,000 in five years. This settlement will thus consolidate Jewish control over Arab Jerusalem, tipping the coveted demographic balance forever in favor of the new Jewish majority.

But Har Homa will not simply be left as an isolated Jewish settlement nearly surrounded by Arab villages. Plans call for the additional confiscation of the 7,000 dunums of land near Abu Ghneim which belong to 2,400 families from Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour. This area, which will connect with Har Homa, is the future site of a vast new industrial/tourist complex, a "Bethlehem, Israel." The new complex will stretch west to the settlements of Gilo and north to East Talpiot, virtually enclosing the northern side of Bethlehem. With it, Israeli planners hope to exploit what has traditionally been Bethlehem's main source of

income tourism.

In addition to planned luxury hotels and souvenir shops, an industrial site will be built for factories producing olive wood souvenirs, thus undermining Bethlehem's centuries-old arts and crafts industry.

The blueprints put this new infrastructure as close as 1000 meters from the birthplace of Jesus, in the heart of Bethlehem. Local residents are not blind to the danger posed by such a project. "Israel has at least six different and seemingly independent plans and schemes that, when joined together, form a master plan for changing the geographic and historical nature of northern Bethlehem and southern Jerusalem, while developing the whole area to the maximum," comments Ghassan Andoni. In fact, Israel is already scrambling to capitalize on "Bethlehem 2000," the Christian celebration of the 2000-year anniversary of Jesus' birth. Some 2.6 million Christian tourists are expected for these celebrations. Christians are the main stay of the tourist economy in Israel, comprising according to the Israeli Ministry of Tourism 63 percent of the tourists in 1995.

Israel's development of the Har Homa complex will effectively co-opt Bethlehem's tourist economy, which is still reeling from the effects of the three-year old closure of the West Bank and Gaza. Elias Freij, Palestinian Tourism Minister and Mayor of Bethlehem, points out that Israel has consistently undermined Bethlehem's tourist economy. Plans for the area around Rachel's Tomb, near Bethlehem's center and located in Area C (the 70 percent of the West Bank still under Israeli occupation), illustrate this point.

A 100-meter long wall has recently been constructed down the middle of Bethlehem's main street, effectively dividing it into two sections: a 6-meter wide path for passing traffic and a 10-meter wide avenue for the entrance to the Tomb. The narrow road chokes traffic while heavy construction under armed guard on the "Jewish side" of the wall makes life in the area unbearable. According to plans obtained by the Committee for the Defense of Bethlehem, a yeshiva (center of Jewish religious study), a tourist bus parking lot (the construction of which will necessitate further confiscation in the middle of Bethlehem) and other additions will expand the settlers' presence in the middle of town.

The wall, the closure, and the (proposed Har Homa) tourist village will help Israel to expand its annual \$3 billion-dollar tourist industry while destroying our several-million dollar annual income," notes Freij. Desperate families in the Bethlehem area have watched as their chances for any viable future have been bulldozed into a dream of the past. Struggles against these plans are complicated by reports that the Palestinian Authority has approved designs for the road.

It remains to be seen if Palestinian political leaders will be strong enough to resist at least the new settlement construction along Bethlehem's northern border. Politically, the closing off of Bethlehem epitomizes the wider Israeli vision of the final political solution for Jerusalem and the West Bank. Construction of the patrol road and the Har Homa settlement complex will successfully create a Bethlehem-area "bantustan," similar to the other determined areas of the West Bank.

Physically isolated and economically strangled, these enclaves will essentially become Palestinian ghettos in the Autonomous Areas. In Bethlehem, hardest hit will be the local Christians.

With the loss of traditional income from Christian tourists, more members of the already reduced Christian community will be forced to emigrate. Even before the 2000th anniversary celebrations begin, Bethlehem will be relegated to the permanent status of provincial village, economically dependent upon Israel with no space to grow.

Challenge Magazine

US initiative seeks to maximize global use of Internet

By Berta Gomez
USIA Staff Writer

Paper in Washington, D.C. is a grand gesture to the United States. It would be a great idea to have a paper in every country, but it is not a realistic idea. It appears there will be a paper in every country.

oil-rich states

million barrels of oil a day. The rate of 25,000 barrels a day in this field would be a great idea. It would be a great idea to have a paper in every country, but it is not a realistic idea. It appears there will be a paper in every country.

President Omar El Barfani's country spends \$100 million on oil products. This is a great idea. It would be a great idea to have a paper in every country, but it is not a realistic idea. It appears there will be a paper in every country.

radh

During the meeting, the United States and Washington were informed about the situation in the country. It was a great idea to have a paper in every country, but it is not a realistic idea. It appears there will be a paper in every country.

State Department officials met with the ambassador of the United States. It was a great idea to have a paper in every country, but it is not a realistic idea. It appears there will be a paper in every country.

US officials and the State Department are working to improve the situation in the country. It was a great idea to have a paper in every country, but it is not a realistic idea. It appears there will be a paper in every country.

LOS ANGELES—The Clinton administration is working domestically and internationally to "open the floodgates of cyberspace" by extending copyright protection to books, music, films, software, and other products that can be digitized and disseminated through the Internet, says the senior Commerce Department official responsible for patents and trademarks.

"The very nature of cyberspace is international... so it's appropriate to work at two levels at the same time," Bruce Lehman, an assistant commerce secretary and the commissioner of patents and trademarks, told public and private sector leaders 16 July meeting here for the Intellectual Property Conference of the Americas.

The 15-17 July conference, which drew more than 500 participants from 32 countries around the hemisphere, builds on the process launched at the 1994 Summit of the Americas in Miami to create a regional free-trade zone by 2005.

In Los Angeles, delegates from around the hemisphere repeatedly affirmed the link between free trade and intellectual property protection. Discussion focused on how—and whether—countries should adapt their laws and enforcement practices to reap the full benefits of new technology and still protect intellectual prop-

erty rights.

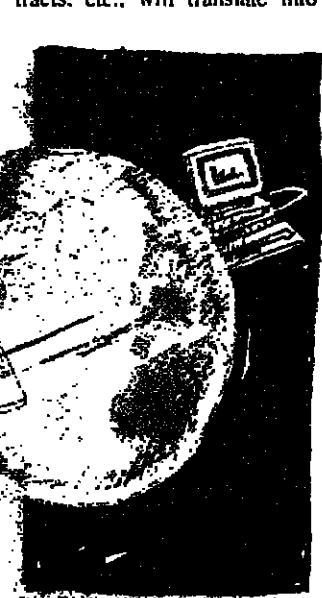
For the Clinton administration, the effort to keep pace with Internet technology has produced a two-pronged approach, according to Lehman. The administration is both negotiating with Congress to extend US copyright laws into cyberspace, and working with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to draft new protocols to the Berne Convention—the principal multilateral treaty dealing with copyrights.

That initiative has sparked debate in the United States among Internet service providers and legal experts who wonder whether existing legal norms are adequate to regulate the behavior of millions of people with access to the Internet.

And while several conference delegates said they would favor a different approach, they agreed with Lehman that copyright protection is the key to unlocking the Internet's full potential by making valuable "works of the mind" available to the widest possible audience, and simultaneously ensuring that those who produced and financed those works receive compensation.

Lehman also assured representatives that the administration's approach is not an effort to impose uniform laws on

every country, but rather a recognition of the need "in an international environment in which we are all linked together... to have a system in which (different) laws all operate within a harmonious framework... so that people who are in one country can understand how licensing agreements, contracts, etc., will translate into



the laws of other countries." Lehman credited the US initiative at WIPO with expanding the Berne Convention debate to include digital issues that affect Internet usage. A draft protocol, which will be considered at WIPO's diplomatic conference in Geneva in December, would require member-countries to recognize the "exclusive

rights" of copyright owners to control the exploitation of their works by digital transmission.

"Such protection would assist copyright owners in their efforts to make their works available on-line and know that they have a reasonable level of security," Lehman said.

The protocol would also require countries to pass laws against "third party" circumvention of technological protections. "You wouldn't want someone selling copies of a pass-key to your house," Lehman noted, adding that "similar norms" should apply to the protection of copyrighted material.

In addition to the Berne protocols, the United States and other countries are working with WIPO to draft a so-called "new instrument" dealing with rights in sound recordings and a third treaty that would offer protection to producers of large data-bases.

The treaty proposals are based on domestic legislation the Clinton administration has submitted to Congress, and which would basically refine existing US copyright laws to cover Internet transmissions.

Although Lehman was optimistic over the possibility of taking quick action to extend copyright protection to the Internet, some lawyers at the conference—as well as representatives of on-line computer services—suggested that the Internet may not lend itself to laws that regulate traditional publishing.

"In cyberspace we have 60

million publishers, because everyone who uses the Internet is a publisher," said Los Angeles lawyer David Nimmer, the author of a book on copyright law.

At the same time, Nimmer said the law proposed by the administration could help push Internet providers to develop techniques to prevent their clients from committing copyright violations.

"I'm not ready to throw that possibility out; we really don't know how this technology will develop," Nimmer said.

William Burrington, associate general counsel for America Online Inc., said the legislative package would make the provider of an Internet service liable for copyright violations committed by its subscribers. That is, if a client of America Online were to download and resell a copyrighted product, the company could be sued.

"The legislation deserves a serious look, but I think the issues need to be re-examined," Burrington said.

"We need to find a way to encourage the free flow of information, but in such a way that those liable (for copyright infringements) are made truly liable for their actions."

Burrington also predicted that continued privatization of communications services in Latin America would produce an explosion of on-line services—making the Internet-related legal issues discussed at the conference all the more relevant.

It's hard to goof up with new generation of cameras

By Timothy R. Dougherty
LA Times-Washington Post News Service

WHEN PHOTO industry heavyweights got together a decade ago to develop a virtually mistake-proof amateur camera, they had a guy like Jerry Goldbaum in mind.

Just a few weeks ago, before heading off to Paris for a family vacation, Goldbaum went shopping in the vicinity of his Long Island, N.Y., home for a new camera. His aim was simple. He wanted something less bulky than the 35-mm camera and camcorder he already had, something that would automatically focus the lens and provide perfect exposure settings under a variety of lighting conditions. He didn't want to change f-stops, focus the lens, check the light meter or worry about mistakes in loading the film into the back of the camera. He wanted a point-and-shoot camera that produced snapshots to rival those from high-quality 35-mm cameras.

One more thing: He didn't want to spend big bucks.

A tall order, indeed. Yet, this kind of camera is precisely the type of product the world's largest makers of cameras are now introducing—after spending millions of dollars during the past decade in a remarkable joint effort.

The five manufacturers, Eastman Kodak, Canon, Fuji, Nikon and Minolta, agreed to share technological advances to turn around an industry-wide slump in camera sales. Their goal was to come up with a new format in film size and a radically new product. Each would market their own models, but base them on the shared technology that couples traditional film with the digital revolution.

Their offering, which they hope will do for the industry what CDs have done for the music industry, is called an APS, or advanced photo system, camera.

"We are looking for ways to expand the business of photography," said Chuck Westfall, assistant manager of professional markets for Canon USA in Lake Success, N.Y. "This is an add-on, not a replacement" camera for people who, like Goldbaum, already own a 35-mm camera.

Goldbaum settled on a \$189 Kodak 4100i, one of seven new APS models Kodak launched in April. And what does he have to say? "The camera really doesn't look like much, but I think it's great. It's small—it doesn't weigh much more than a couple of ounces—but the pictures turned out beautiful."

Now, if millions more consumers follow Goldbaum's lead, there will be signs of relief among a bunch of anxious camera-industry executives.

However, introducing a new format is nothing new to camera makers. Remember the disk cameras? They were small and cute, and the industry spent millions on development and marketing. But they produced lousy pictures, and the manufacturers took a bath.

The impetus this time is to offer a nearly fool-proof camera that is packed with technological improvements designed to help users avoid past problems.

Owners of 35-mm cameras have a litany of complaints, the most common: thinking they had wonderful pictures of Uncle Bob doing a cannonball into the pool only to find out later that the film was never threaded into the camera.

They also gripe about finding a roll of film in a drawer or at the bottom of a purse and not knowing whether they'd shot the film. To avoid that, APS film cassettes have distinct signals on one end of the canisters that show whether all, some or none of the frames have been exposed.

Then there are problems with storing strips of negatives and not knowing which negative to use when they want to make copies of a favorite snapshot.

The feature that primarily distinguishes an APS camera from its 35-mm cousin is how the film is exposed and processed.

The photographer using an APS camera never sees or touches the unexposed film, even when it is loaded into the camera or removed for processing. When the film is processed and returned, the strip of negatives is inside the film cassette.

There is no strip of film to thread into the back of the camera before shooting pictures. When developed film is picked up after processing, the photographer gets a print from each negative along with an index-size card of photo proofs, showing miniature pictures of every exposure on the roll. The strip of negatives is returned to the film cassette.

If copies of a print are ordered, the entire film canister is sent back to the processor, along with the index-card proof. Each miniature photo on the card has a corresponding number, and that number is marked on the order form. But film pressing alone does not set the APS camera apart.

Each model allows the user to choose between three print formats. A button or a small switch—depending on the manufacturer and the model—produces either a standard 4-by-6-inch print format, a panoramic 4-by-10-inch format or a full-frame 4-by-7-inch format used for photos of a group of people.

Buyers now can buy panoramic cameras at stores, but these cameras shoot nothing but wide-format pictures.

The APS film also contains a small magnetic strip that encodes a variety of data that allows words, numbers and phrases to be printed on the back of each photo. It can be used to record the name or place of the subject, the time and the date. What's more, the strip also digitally records information about conditions under which the film was exposed. The data is read by the processing equipment, which can adjust the light exposure for each negative on the strip. This is a major breakthrough in film processing, and it allows processors to make quality prints.

Unlike 35-mm cameras, some APS models allow users to remove a roll of film that is not completely used up, then return it later. When it's returned, the camera advances the film to the next frame for exposure. But technological advances alone may not be able to bring back consumers hooked on video cameras.

The price of APS film is as much as 15 percent higher than that for a 35-mm camera. Processing costs also are higher. Prices for the cameras range from about \$70 for basic models to more than \$400 for more sophisticated ones.

Manufacturers are working on a system that will allow the magnetic strip on the film to convert images into a digital format to be displayed on television screens and eventually into computers where images can be loaded onto existing files.



AROUND TOWN



Al Majd performs to Palestine

● Palestinian folklore lit the Jerash festival last week. Al Majd, a group from Nazareth, performed to the fullest at the Light and Sound Theater, to a packed audience. By popular demand, they performed one more night at the festival. Al Majd performed traditional Palestinian folklore. The group was formed in 1993 under the direction of the late mayor of Nazareth, Tawfiq Zayad.



ZOOM

They were all there!

● It seems that Mr Kab-rini's cabinet ministers who attended Al Roumi's concert last week are tired of politics. The ministers felt at ease in an evening of genuine art. Some say that they were forced to come because of their wives who rarely see them.

Thanks Jerash

● Ever since it started in 1981, the Jerash Festival occupied a reputable position among other international festivals. One reason for that is to do with its well-planned organization. Though in some years there were chaotic scenes, here and there, like what happened in the Kathim Al Saher's concert last year, the festival, this year, is another story. A large number of security forces, ushers and coordinators are distributed all over the city with many checkpoints. No one is allowed to enter without obtaining a ticket or a badge. But still, we noticed that some journalists, obtained in a way or another, additional badges for relatives and friends!

Where are the poets?

● The people who came to last week's inauguration of the poetry festival were surprised to know that only four poets out of eight, attended. This is not the first time that poets are absent. I am sure that they let their audience down by being indifferent. We demand an explanation from the administration of the festival and the poetry committee. I wonder why we always complain about the decrease in the number of people who attend the poetry festival!

Gulf meets in Jerash

● The audience that watched the UAE singer Ahlam last week, was mostly from the Gulf. Contrary to expectations, Ahlam received a big crowd in the South Theater. It can be said that having a female singer from the Gulf is something of a rarity that people came along to see. What was unexpected is that people came all the way from the Gulf, and right on the very same day. Women wearing the traditional veil just danced enthusiastically. The cheering continued after midnight. Ahlam was so excited that she didn't want to leave the stage.

Journalists complain

● Journalists who had the privilege to sit at the front part of the theater are angry. Their chairs have been stolen by some people who are not pressmen and yet were allowed to get a chair. The administration should figure out the exact number of journalists who are nominated by their newspapers to get badges.

Photographers call for equality

● Not all, but some photographers were able to take the pose they want when they tried to take pictures of singers. Those who were deprived of the privilege, their colleagues had, are calling on the Festival organizers to treat them equally. Are we to witness a strike, I doubt it.

Al Roumi sings for love and peace

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

The South Theater in Jerash sprang to life last week by the impressive performance of the Lebanese singer Majda Al Roumi. She sang for Lebanon and the terrible tragedy of Qana.

Filled to a capacity, the theater echoed the pure, operatic voice of an artist who dedicated herself to originality and perfection.

The audience came to watch and listen to an artist whose style of singing and performance is unique. She took them as far as Lebanon with her new melancholic song, Grapes of Wrath. It recalls the massacre of Qana with contempt to the enemy and anger with its accomplices.

The audience, young, old, men and women, expected to listen to slow and emotional songs but were dazzled by songs which bore an angry, challenging and political tone.

Just as she excelled in her humanistic songs, Al Roumi

stirred the very emotions of the people by her famous song, *Kalimat* (Words). The song says that the words of the beloved are not like ordinary words. A highly imaginative song, the lover is mesmerized to an extent that she feels as "being planted in a cloud waiting to grow up." At this, the audience went wild with endless cheering.

That was the truest and most fulfilled moments Al Roumi ever went through as she was later to confess.

Another song which kindled the hearts of people was excerpts taken from *Madreh Al Thil Al Aali*, a poem written by Mahmoud Darwish, the famous Palestinian poet. The poem which was written in the



Photo by Fouad Jhour

aftermath of the Israeli invasion of South Lebanon in 1982, eulogizes the dead, and expresses anger and disappointment at the same time. The song rekindled the sense of frustration bringing about memories of the old days of

struggle. The words of the song/poem talks about those who betrayed the revolution saying that "masks are falling down" and that honest people are fighting alone, not waiting for others to help them. The audience asked

Al Roumi to repeat this song. She said that Jerash has contributed much to her success. Her artistic career really took off after appearing in the festival of 1986.

It has been 10 years since Al Roumi has sung in Jerash. She said that she will never forget the people who appreciated her and helped her reach such high levels of creativity. Akram Masarweh, the director of the festival, who introduced the singer, said that she is the daughter of the festival and that she also contributed to the success of the festival and its reputation.

Al Roumi held two successful concerts last week. The second concert was attended by HRH Princess Sumaya, her husband, Director of JTV Nasser Joudeh, Minister of Water, Samir Qawar, Minister of Tourism, Saleh Irsheidat, Minister of Information Dr. Marwan Al Moasher, and Minister of Trade and Industry, Ali Abu Ragheb. Al Roumi wrapped up the two concerts with her song *Ya Beirut* (O Beirut). ■

Caracalla presents the language of body

AMMAN (Star)—The Lebanese Caracalla Dance Theater is now ranked among the most famous dancing troupes in the world. Ever since it was established in 1970, the group sought to revive the rich Arab heritage and present it in a modern perspective. Today, Thursday, at the Palace of Culture, the group is presenting the historical epic *Elissa, Queen of Carthage*. The performance will last for three days.

The art, Caracalla creates, can be described as a representation of Arab civilization. It has a message to deliver to the world and the West in particular: to eliminate the misconceptions about Arab culture and history.

Mr. Abd Al Haleem Caracalla, the founder of the group, stressed that Arab tradition and culture is rich and diverse. He added, during a press conference last Monday, that "we do not have nowadays those who can really tackle the folkloric aspects in a modern way. What we are actually aiming at is to set off a cultural identity to the whole world."

The kind of music that Caracalla introduces is immense in traditional forms. The music is highly expressive as it says what the lyrics can not.

The composers of the musical pieces of the works are Marcel Khalifeh, Waleed Ghulmeh and Charpeel Rohana from Lebanon. Khalifeh, who is a well-known singer, in as much as he is a brilliant composer, started to write for Caracalla from its early beginnings.

The Lebanese poet Saeed Aqel, a man in his eighties, and the philosopher of the group, wrote the lyrics and the scenario of *Elissa*.

Khalifeh said earlier that the group is looking forward to creating what can be called an Oriental Ballet. This is a mix-



ture of folkloric lyrics and music. Caracalla stressed that fact, saying the ballet form does not exist in the repertoire of Arabic music.

The group is an institution of art. Its members are university graduates who, as Caracalla put it, are required to understand what they are presenting. They have been taught the techniques of dancing on stage and the way their bodies should interact with music.

"The whole body is moving to express the idea at its best," Caracalla pointed out. ■

Poets immortalize Qana's victims

AMMAN (Star)—The inauguration of the poetry festival last Saturday was thrilling. The words of the poets on the Artemis Theatre re-enlivened the soul of the rock and the audience were taken back to an enchanting past. They read some of their old and new poems with different styles. Eight poets were on the schedule of the opening ceremony but—as it occasionally happens—only four poets attended. The poets were Muhammad Ali Shams Al Din from Lebanon, Muhammad Abu Doumah, Egypt, Suleiman Oweis and Nayef Abu Ubeid from Jordan.

Shams Al Deen was the first. With a powerful voice he read an old, but short poem mourning the loss of a beloved. Then, he read a long poem condemning the Qana massacre and eulogizing the dead. It was a dialogue with destroyed houses and the relics of the victims.

Nayef Abu Ubeid read popular and classical poetry. Some of his poems are criticisms of social attitudes such as hypocrisy and others criticize the decline of Arab past glory. His poems are didactic as they are of ambiguous allusions.

Abu Doumah, a Sufist poet, was next. With a highly rhythmic and metaphysical content, he excelled in his performance. He captivated the audience through a rhythm which rises gradually till it reaches a peak, making his poetic vision complete. He was able to turn his poems into hymns sung for the sake of purification. Through his poetry, Abu Doumah sought the unity of his soul with God to reach fulfillment.

Suleiman Oweis, the popular Jordanian poet, rounded the recital off. He read a collection of *Mawawel*, these are short lyrics of four lines, which appear every day in the *Al Rai* daily. The audience admired Oweis's nationalistic and moral tone.

The poetry section will last through out the festival. Recitals are held at Darat Al Funun. This section is so important that it is regarded as a "parallel" to the main Jerash Festival of Art and Culture. Other than that, and starting from next week, there will be what is called as critical workshops. Poets meet at the Shomran foundation in Jabal Amman to discuss aspects of modern Arab poetry. ■

Kryger brings opera to Jerash

AMMAN (Star)—The performance of the Polish opera singer, Ursula Kryger can be described as magical. Accompanied by the pianist Katarzyna Jankowska, Kryger sang last Saturday at the Royal Cultural Center to musical pieces by great musicians like Bellini, Chopin, Strauss, etc.. She is a Mezzosoprano vocalist (the medium level of women voice).

Kryger specializes in the classical form of music. She told *The Star* that she is fond of slow, romantic music which is performed by a limited number of musicians in Poland presently. "The old music is targeted these days to the intellectual elite," she added.

Kryger was born in Lodz, in Poland. Her interest in music started at the age of five and in the next 15 years she played piano. "After I started to be a singer, I stopped playing piano because it was necessary to focus on one thing," she said. She began her vocal education under the supervision of professor Jadwiga Piewtraskiewicz. Kryger won several prizes between 1990 and 1994, the most important and latest were the First Prize at the International Brahms Competition in Hamburg and the First Prize at the ARD International Music Competition in Munich.

Katarzyna Jankowska is now the faculty member of the Chopin Academy in Warsaw. The main area of her musical activity is chamber music. She is considered one of the leading accompanists in Poland as she has taken part in more than 40 famous international competitions.

The concert was in two parts. In the first part, Kryger sang for Vincenzo Bellini's *Malinconia*, *Nimpha gentile* and *vonne o rosa formata*. She also sang Rossini's *La Promessa* and *Isabella's aria* from the opera *Italiana in Algieri*. After that she sang three songs for Johannes Brahms and three for Richard Strauss. In the second part there was Chopin's *Desire*, *Sad River*, *Wherever He Likes* and *My Sweet Darling*. She also sang George Bizet's *Car-men* and Gaetano Donizetti's *La favorta*. ■



Jerash Festival program

Thursday 25 July

- Mustafa Qamar, Egypt (South Theater)
- Iraqi music, Hussein al A'hami, (Artemis)
- Mou'ia University Band, (Sound and Light)
- Arabic poetry, (Gracia)
- Al Neel (Forum)
- Maria Jose Morias, pianist, Portugal (RCC)
- Caracalla, (Palace of Culture)

Friday 26 July

- Mustafa Qamar, (South Theater)
- Theatrical performance, "Media" (Artemis)
- Amman National University band (Sound and Light)
- Creative theater at Gracia
- Egyptian Circus, Trakia and Moroccan Muwashah, (Forum)
- Syrian Bashrah Zaqan, Sufi, (RCC)
- Caracalla, (Palace of Culture)

Saturday 27 July

- Armenian folklore, (South Theater)
- "Media" (Artemis)
- German folklore (Sound and Light)
- Haltham Amer, Jordan (Gracia)
- "The ox, my lord!" (Gracia)
- Trakia, (Forum)
- Egyptian Circus (Forum)
- Caracalla (Palace of Culture)
- Chamber music (Citadel)

Sunday 28 July

- Sabah Fakhri, Syria (South Theater)

Play by Sharif Khazendar

- German Folklore (Sound and Light)
- Haltham Amer and his Band, (Gracia)
- "The ox, my lord!" (Gracia)
- Egyptian Circus (Forum)
- Bashrah Zaqan, (RCC)

Monday 29 July

- Sabah Fakhri, Syria (South Theater)
- Play by Sharif Khazendar (Artemis)
- Taipei Folklore, (Sound and Light)
- Rami Shafiq, (Gracia)
- "The ox, my lord!" (Gracia)
- German Folklore (Forum)
- Egyptian Circus (Forum)

Tuesday 30 July

- Mazantini Group, Spain (South Theater)
- Play by Sharif Khazendar (Artemis)
- Taipei Folklore, (Sound and Light)
- Rami Shafiq (Gracia)
- Poetry (Gracia)
- German Folklore (Forum)
- Egyptian Circus (Forum)

Wednesday 31 July

- Mazantini Group, (South Theater)
- Children's Choir, France (Artemis)
- Family International, (Sound and Light)
- Poetry reading and singing by prodigy child Haltham Al Shomali (Gracia)
- Egyptian Circus (Forum)

Thursday 1 August

- Najwa Karam, Lebanon (South Theater)
- NMC, (Artemis)
- Family International, (Sound and Light)
- Hassan Salloom Percussion Band and Solo Flute, (Gracia)
- Chinese Folklore, (Forum)
- Egyptian Circus, (Forum)
- Egyptian Ballet, Swan Lake, (RCC)

Friday 2 August

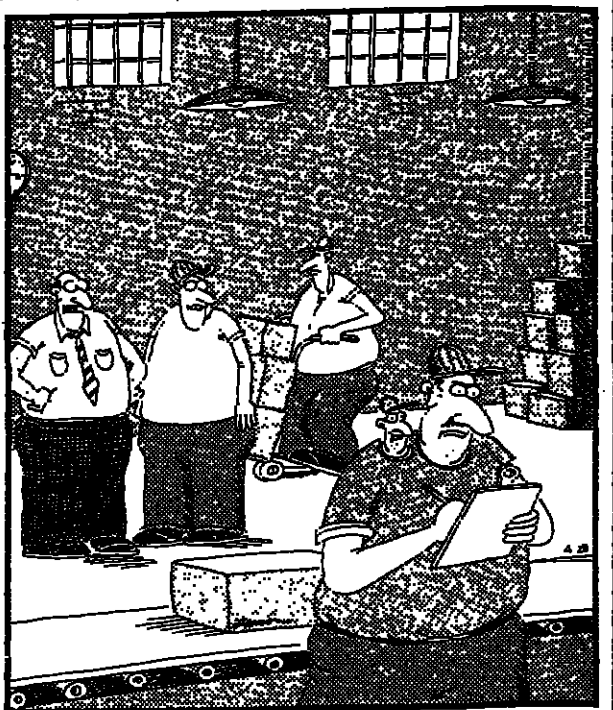
- Najwa Karam, (South Theater)
- The Cavern Beatles, UK (Artemis)
- Jordan University Band, (Sound and Light)
- Hassan Salloom Percussion and Solo Flute, (Gracia)
- Chinese Folklore, (Forum)
- Egyptian Circus, (Forum)
- Egyptian Ballet Group, Swan Lake, (RCC)

Saturday 3 August

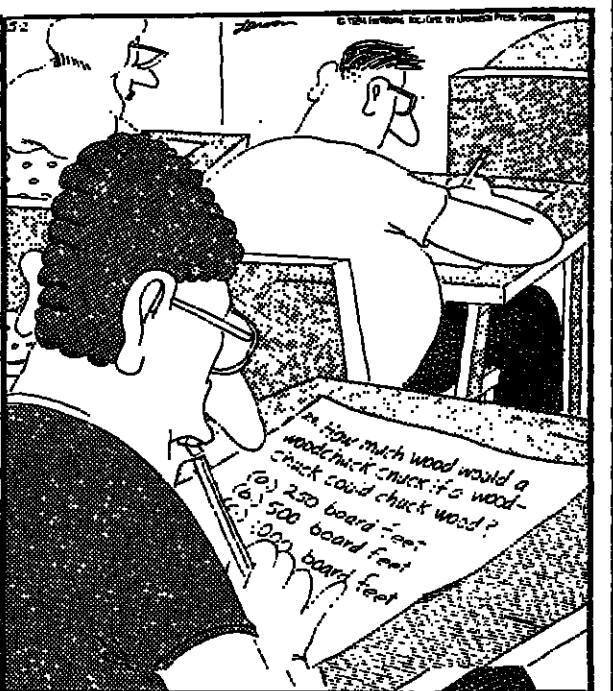
- Najwa Karam, Lebanon (South Theater)
- The Cavern Beatles, UK (Artemis)
- Jordan University Band, (Sound and Light)
- Chinese Folklore, (Forum)
- Egyptian Circus, (Forum)
- Egyptian Ballet, Swan Lake (RCC)
- Closing Ceremony (Gracia)

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



"Oh, and a word of warning about Mueller over there... He's got a good head on his shoulders, but it's best not to mention it."



The Wildlife Management finals



Basic lives



"Whoa! Another bad one! ... I see your severed head lying quietly in the red-stained dirt, a surprised expression still frozen in your lifeless eyes. ... Next."

AGENDA

- Exhibitions**
 - Ceramics exhibition, at Jordan Design and Trade Center, ends today
 - An exhibition by Sudanese artist Rachid Diab, entitled *The Time of Silence*, at Darat Al Funun, continues till 31 July.
 - An exhibition by contemporary Arab artists, at Darat Al Funun, continues till 31 July.
- Films**
 - 31 July:
 - *The Mighty Mouse*, at The British Council, starts on 30 July at 5:00 pm.
 - *The Black Adder*, at The British Council, starts on 31 July at 7:00 pm.
- Concert**
 - A concert by *La Maitrise des Hauts de Seine* at The French Cultural center, continues between 26 July till 2 August

18 JULY 1996
SIDE
ARY LARSON
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END
31 July
Films
The British Museum
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Concert
A concert by Le Monde
des Hautes et Basses
French Cultural Center
...
August

JULY 1996

A special section offering
fresh perspectives on
global issues prepared for
The Star

THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN FIVE LANGUAGES
ON FIVE CONTINENTS



CIRCULATING IN: AMMAN • BANGKOK • BEIJING • BUGOTA • BOMBAY • BOSTON • CAIRO • CARACAS • HONG KONG • JAKARTA • KARACHI • KUALA LUMPUR • LIMA • MANILA • MEXICO CITY • PANAMA CITY • SAN JOSE • SANTIAGO DE CHILE • TAIPEI • TOKYO • QUITO

Cult of heavy industry hard for East Europeans to break

Humans just another cog in the machine

By Silviu Brucan

IN EAST EUROPE, the relationship between humans and machines is still framed by the economic, social and psychological legacy of the communist drive for rapid industrialization.

Since Lenin and Stalin declared industrialization to be socialism's main goal, a real cult developed around advanced machine tools. In the 1950s, the first tractor made in Romania was celebrated as a national event. But the political system which venerated machine tools abhorred information technology.

When the new technologies began to emerge, the system of state-planning proved too rigid to assimilate them. Regimes based on information control came in conflict with faxes, computers and cellular phones. In countries like Romania, where even manual typewriters had to be registered at local militia stations, the communist leadership fought a rearguard action against the new machines that left their country a decade behind its competitors in the West.

Following the revolutions of 1989, computer giants like Apple, Gold Star,

IBM and Digital flooded East Europe with their machines, competing furiously to establish information networks in the post-communist societies. Once you are drawn into this whirlwind of immediate communication and immediate information, the global marketplace gives you little alternative to staying on and keeping up with the latest developments.

REPORTING
FROM
BUCHAREST

During 1994-95, approximately 100,000 Russians and East Europeans went—with varying degrees of reluctance—online through computers linked to the Internet. But,

due to cost, businesses still make up most of the users in this part of the world.

In addition to this global imperative, East Europe must become technologically current if it is to achieve its predominant goal: integration into the Euro-Atlantic structure, specifically NATO and the European Union (EU). To qualify, East European nations must close the terrible economic gap between them and the Western part of their continent. But East Europe is having a hard time letting go of its old, losing strategy of modernizing through industrialization.

For instance, Romania's blueprint for gaining admission to the EU sets a target of 10.1 percent annual growth for industrial production, which will—if attained—bring the country level with Greece and Portugal by 2004. It does, however, state that Romanians should acquire a degree of computer literacy and speak at least one other language.

From a social standpoint, East Europe is not ready for the large-scale introduction of computers and information technology. While the West has a large middle class which provides millions of Internet users, the East European middle class is just taking shape. Thus computers, which are close to being a household appliance in the US, are still an unaffordable luxury for most East Europeans.

Meanwhile, the region's leaders are becoming alarmed at the one-way traffic coming down the Internet and cable-television channels. The sense that local cultures and identities could be overwhelmed is compounded by the violence, sexual perversity and obscenities that abound in Western television programs and films.

Some of these tensions were on display

at a recent seminar in Bucharest on the role of computers in modern society. The keynote speaker argued that the human brain is nothing more than a digital computer, and therefore computers will soon be able to do just about anything a human mind can. Most of those attending challenged this assertion, but they did concede that the human mind could be dragged down to the level of computers.

This concern applies especially to children. If they spend hours watching TV and playing with computers, they will have little time for classical literature. And if they do not read and think about Shakespeare, Goethe or Pushkin, then machines will have succeeded in dimming the intensity of intellectual inquiry—mankind's greatest asset. The conferees concluded that societies need to prevent this from happening.

The fact is that up to now, the technological revolution has generated its own momentum. Humans have shown little ability to control its direction or mitigate the damage it does. Today, the current generation of information technology is expelling workers from the industrial process. The result: mass unemployment, an outcome humans would try and avoid if they were really using their brains to deal with the machinery they create. ©

SILVIU BRUCAN is *The World Paper's* ASSOCIATE EDITOR FOR EASTERN EUROPE.

As the winter war between chess master Gary Kasparov and an IBM computer highlights, the tug-of-war between human and machine continues unabated. But this age-old mixture of innovation, reaction, adaptation and cooperation comes in a variety of national flavors

"Mechanical wallets" catch on

ATM banking unites Filipinos

By Yet Vitug

RICH FILIPINOS ARE millions of pesos different from their poor countrymen, but their wallets contain one thing in common: the automated teller machine (ATM) card.

The common denominator does not end there. A company president, like the construction worker, has to patiently queue in most ATM booths. The plastic card has therefore become sort of a social leveler and has also succeeded in instilling discipline among Filipinos. While it has vastly reduced person-to-person transactions in the bank, Filipinos remain a warm people, in spite of the offerings of cold technology.

Of all technologies recently introduced in the Philippines it is the ATM which has created the greatest impact on the lives of the citizenry. Unlike cellular phones, fax machines and computers, ATMs cater to the cross-section of society. To some, it is the means to settle power or telephone bills by simply pushing buttons. It is likewise the lifeline to the dependents of some four million overseas contract workers who remit their earnings through a bank which, in turn, debits the amount in the account of the recipient, withdrawable from the ATM. There is less reliance now on sending money home through co-workers bound for the Philippines.

ly, the machines were availed of only by the upper and middle classes who, since transactions can be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week, saw it as an emergency cash box.

The office employee, meanwhile, had mistakenly equated it with a credit card, considered a distinctive mark of those awash in cash or blessed with huge incomes. Ordinary workers likewise felt intimidated by, and suspicious of, these machines. Would it dispense the right amount? Wouldn't my money vanish if I keyed in a wrong entry?

Today, however, even construction workers earning roughly 180 Philippine pesos (US\$6) a day have access to the ATMs. They have no choice but to contend with their fears of the machine because it is only from the ATMs that they draw their salaries. Starting three years ago, big firms have been paying the wages of some employees through ATMs. Every payday the employees merely receive a slip of paper or statement of account detailing deductions and net pay, withdrawable from the ATM. The practice is now popular even among small firms.

Paying their employees through the ATM offers convenience, eliminates loads of paperwork and cuts the employers' operating costs. With the scheme, the office accountant can perform other functions as he or she is spared the tedious tasks of counting pesos and centavos and slipping them into individual envelopes. It has likewise eliminated the risk of losing half of the monthly payroll to thieves.

Almost all monetary transactions can be facilitated through the ATMs: balance inquiry, withdrawals, transfer of funds to other accounts, payment of bills and deposits. The depositor enjoys control over the transaction and, perhaps most important of all, privacy: The account holder can withdraw as little as P100 without embarrassment, since he or she doesn't have to deal with nosy tellers who might be amused by an account balance that is almost zero.

The growing number of ATM users—legal or otherwise—has its downside. Machines often run out of money or break down during periods of heavy use, notably on paydays. It is extremely frustrating to wait in a long queue, only to find out after a lengthy period of time that the machine went off-line.

There have been several cases too when the ATM gobbled up the card or issued erroneous reports on transactions. There were likewise several in-

► BANKING UNITES PAGE 2

White knight takes blue castle

By Crocker Snow Jr.

NATOLY KARPOV, a 45-year-old Russian, and Gata Kamsky, a 22-year-old American, have been contending for the world chess championship during recent weeks in the Russian town of Elista. But Sicilian openings and Petrov defenses notwithstanding, the real drama for this kibitzer endures from a chess contest earlier this year between the then reigning world champion, Gary Kasparov, and the International Business Machines (IBM) pretender, Deep Blue.

The plot lines of that man against machine confrontation, which took place in Convention Hall in Philadelphia last February, should not be forgotten. Here was Kasparov, two-time world champion, pitted against the largest, most precisely programmed computer ever in a US\$500,000 title match. The Delaware-based Association for Computer Machinery put up the prize money in celebration of its 50th anniversary.

Luddites and iconoclasts around the world like me could only shudder and cringe at the possibility—perhaps probability—Deep Blue would prevail as the first machine chess champion of the world. Despite Kasparov's past victories over computerized challengers, it was even money among aficionados of the game whether silicon smarts would prevail over human intelligence. Kasparov, the arrogant 32-year-old Azerbaijani, confidently proposed that the winner take all the prize money.

After Game One he wasn't so sure. The computer had won after 37 moves, utilizing the powers of split second calculation and prediction made possible by the 32 silicon processors that are its "brain." Mankind needed a counterattack.

Many chess experts were shocked. They had predicted that Kasparov's rationality and experience would prevail in Game One and maybe Game Two before the computer—digitally and bloodlessly—figured out the champion's tendencies. Chess pundits, camped at various Internet sites, believed that the microchip would win out as the match wore on, that the stress and strain generated by publicity, pressure and fatigue would undo Kasparov as the match against the tireless machine progressed.

Wrong again. Deep Blue won the

first match, lost the second, tied the third and fourth and was on the offensive in the fifth before it declined Kasparov's offer of a draw, made an error, and lost the game. Having turned the tide, Kasparov crushed Deep Blue in the final game. It was Kasparov who made the bloodless machine blink, not vice versa. He had predicted as much. "The computer is not flexible," he had stated before the match. "You can accurately guess what kind of decisions it will make."

WORLD DIARY

A turbo-boasted super computer known in the trade as an SP 2, the Big Blue could draw on 32 gigabytes of memory, 128 gigabytes of hard disc space and eight years of work by IBM scientists, allowing it—according to its programmers—to evaluate every combination of Kasparov's options 11 or 12 moves ahead.

But computers are programmed by scientists after all, and it's arguable

chine," perhaps to the millennium. It was an epic event, a struggle precisely waged and proudly won. There was much more at stake psychologically (and in terms of human conceit) than many of us would ever want to admit.

Both Kasparov and Deep Blue are now lone wolves.

The computer is looking for work, while Kasparov has broken with the International Chess Federation over a petty dispute about the location of a 1993 title match.

But if we know now that the two chess champions bawling it out in Russia this month for an in-

flated \$2 million in prize money have more depth than Deep Blue, it is Kasparov whom we can thank for allowing us to revel in that. ©

CROCKER SNOW JR. is EDITOR-IN-CHIEF of *The World Paper*.

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A good loser: after its Deep Blue computer lost to world chess champion Gary Kasparov, IBM took out a tongue-in-cheek advertisement in leading US newspapers lamenting the unemployed status of the vanquished machine. Deep Blue won the first of the six game series, and drew two others, but squandered a winning position in the fifth game that opened the door for Kasparov

IBM
Solutions for a small planet

Catching up with the West shapes Eastern approach to technology

Machinery of government drives Asian attitudes

By M.G.G. Pillai

THE CURRENT relationship between Asians and technology is best described as a shotgun wedding, with national governments wielding the shotgun. Like most marriages of this kind, the partners have little idea about the long-term implications of their union.

Take, for example, Abdul Majid Khan. A spare 70-year-old Malay man, Khan still tends 10 acres of rubber trees in Raub, 60 miles east of Kuala Lumpur, that he inherited from his father 40 years ago.

In his spare time, he teaches the Koran to the children in the village his grandfather had come to almost a century ago. He talks nostalgically of how his life has changed in his seven decades.

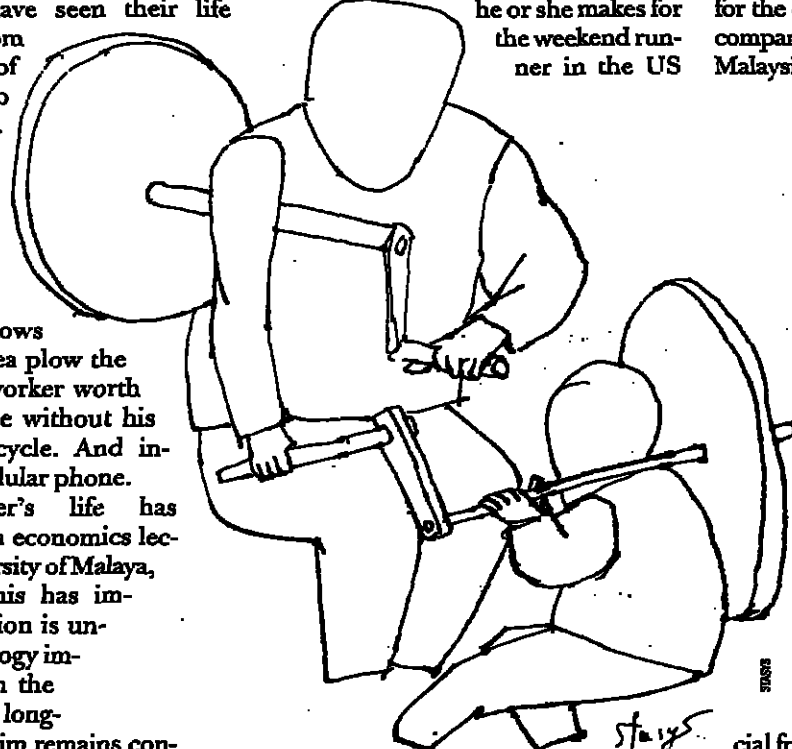
Today he steers a motorcycle deftly along the footpaths, dirt roads and highways, with the ubiquitous cellular phone hanging on his arm. As a part-time insurance agent, he finds it useful to contact his clients. But he remembers when the only way he could move about was by foot. The bicycle arrived in his life 40 years ago, and the motorcycle 20 years later. He would like to slow down, but he cannot—as his father and grandfather could not—if he is to keep body, soul and family together. That is the paradox in his life.

Khan's life reflects the impact of technology. It has opened him to new vistas, and given him new options for managing his work, religion and the additional income he earns. He is a typical case. Thousands of Malaysians, indeed Asians, have seen their life transformed from the near poverty of their parents to relative affluence.

The television is no stranger to most workers, nor the chainsaw or bulldozer. In Kedah state, mechanized plows from South Korea plow the rice fields. No worker worth his salt would be without his Japanese motorcycle. And increasingly the cellular phone.

"The worker's life has changed," said an economics lecturer at the University of Malaya, "but whether this has improved his position is uncertain." Technology improves his life in the short-run, but the long-term impact on him remains contentious. When it comes to technology, Asia has much ground to make up on the West, but its reliable workers and far cheaper wages make it an ideal place

to produce products that the multinational corporations can sell for several times their cost of production. An Indonesian worker would have to spend more than a month's wages to buy a pair of athletic shoes he or she makes for the weekend runner in the US



or Europe. With this influx of industrial technology comes a desire among Asian governments to embrace market eco-

nomics and reduce their commitment to social policies. In their desire to be a cog in the global marketplace, many governments are prepared to downgrade social and cultural programs, providing those who need it most—the workers and the poor—with only rudimentary coverage.

In the current climate, services are made available to anyone who can pay for it. Kuala Lumpur has an excellent cardiology center which has a justifiable reputation in Asia both for the excellence of its facilities and its comparatively low costs. But the average Malaysian cannot afford its services.

Newspapers often carry heart-rending appeals from the poor needing a complicated operation but unable, without public assistance, to pay for it in a government-sponsored hospital.

The archetypal model for this new, technological society is Singapore, which analyzes every social service under the harsh light of profit. Those availing themselves of these services are stigmatized as indigent. In a compact island with a small population, market forces can be made to work hand-in-glove with social forces. Singapore's technology and its byproducts, well orchestrated within its no-nonsense social framework, enables the city-state to operate as it does. The removal of social conscience is balanced by a steady, highly touted growth of wealth and modernization. But the cultural and so-

cial side-effects of full-scale capitalism are, to Singapore's government, offensive. This accounts for the abrasive espousal of what Lee Kuan Yew, the state's eminence grise, insists are Asian values; a return to communitarian ideals of the pre-industrial agrarian society.

These side-effects are the problem with technology, especially when the relationship with its users is imposed rather than allowed to evolve. The chainsaw makes for quick felling of more trees, the bulldozer clears large tracts of land for building houses, more efficient electrical and electronic devices make it simpler for the worker. But the downside of this is not calculated. The environmental, social and cultural consequences of technology are ignored, but it is this efficient use of technology that contributes to frequent floods, changing rainfall and atmospheric patterns—all of which add to the burdens of everyday life in many cities, towns and villages.

To take but one example, when houses are built these days large tracts of land are cleared, the area leveled long before construction begins, leaving the area barren and open to erosion.

Be that as it may, Khan lives for the moment, as most workers do. The problems of the environment and societal and cultural dislocation are way beyond his comprehension, except when it affects his own family. And he has nurtured his children and grandchildren well. In this, he is no different from the worker of yesteryear in Asia. □

M.G.G. PILLAI is a KUALA LUMPUR-BASED WRITER AND COMMENTATOR ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS.

BANKING UNITES

Continued from page 1

stances when withdrawals were debited from someone's account although the machine had failed to dispense the amount. In such instances, the matter has to be reported to bank personnel and the hapless customer has to wait for at least 15 days to iron out the error.

Still, many banks are enticing the people to use their ATM services. The more ATM users, the better the bank's profit margin. A service fee of P10 is slapped after four transactions in a month from your home bank. The service fee is automatically imposed if you used other banks' ATM facility. Moreover, most banks impose a P50 penalty if the ATM account holder fails to maintain the prescribed minimum monthly balance.

Nilo Sanchez, a salesman who has been drawing his salary for two years from an ATM, now prefers the old system of getting an envelope every day right at his office. "I get all of my money on time and don't have to wait in line," he says.

Despite all the complaints, most Filipinos still consider ATMs a big relief. For them the convenience offered more than offsets the problems and risks. □

VET VTUG IS THE MANAGING EDITOR of *Marid Agribusiness Digest*, a MANILA-BASED MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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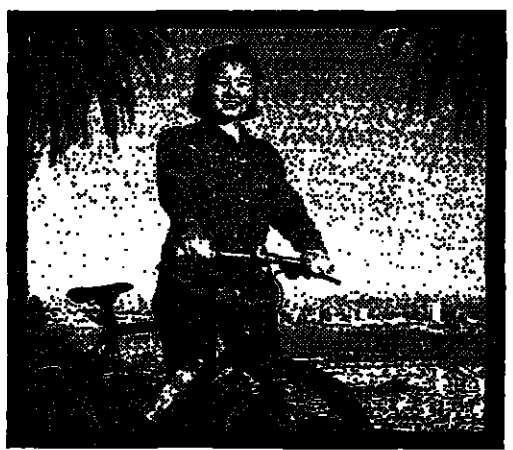
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The Star's TV GUIDE

Programs on JTV
from 27 July - 2 August

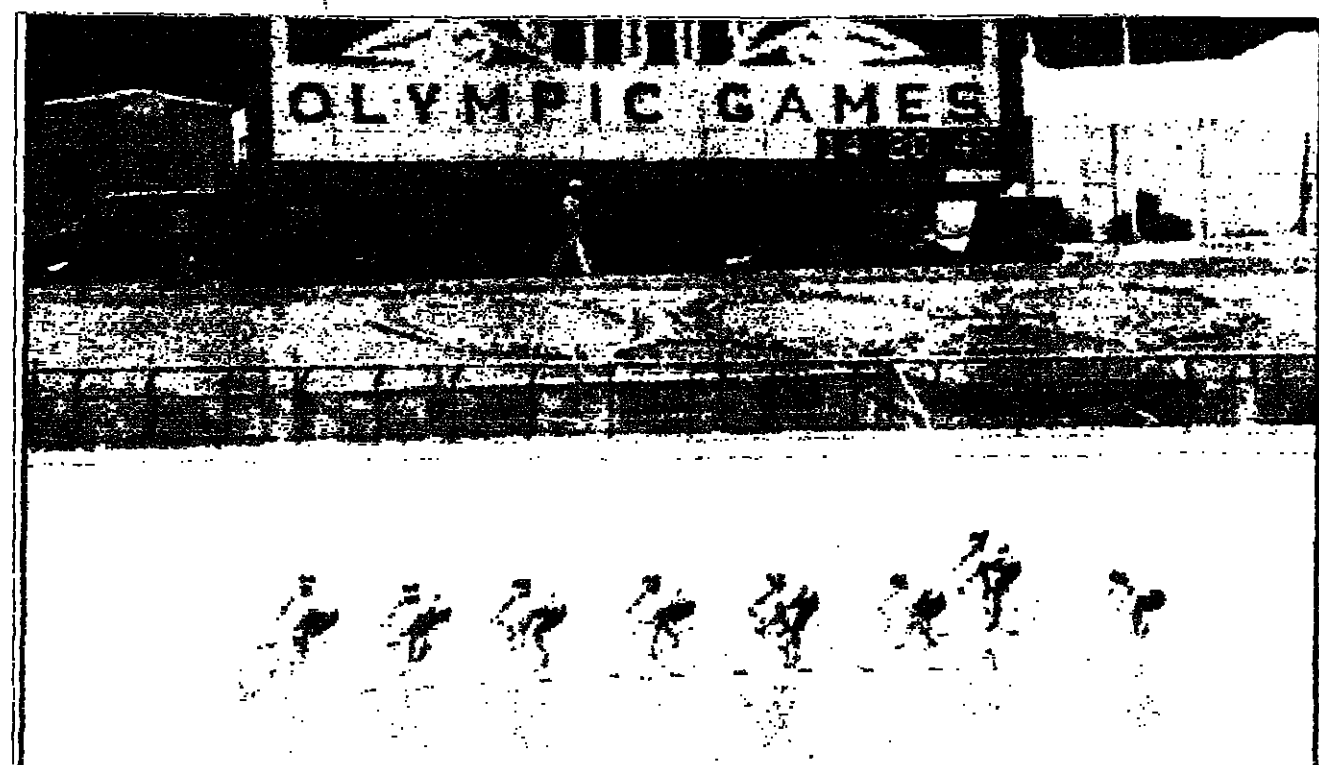
ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY
3:05—Moonraker
3:30—Pumpkin Patch
3:45—Big Brother Jake
4:10—Olympic Games
7:00—News in French
7:25—Olympic Games
10:00—News in English
10:20—Olympic Games
1:40—Varieties
2:25—Olympic Games

SUNDAY
3:05—The Mask
3:23—Bush School
3:35—Mac and Mutley
3:55—Olympic Games
7:00—News in French
7:15—Olympic Games
10:00—News in English
10:20—Olympic Games
1:55—Varieties
2:25—Olympic Games
06:35—Closing

MONDAY
3:05—Richie Rich
3:30—Bankers
3:55—Olympic Games
7:00—News in French
7:15—Olympic Games
10:00—News at Ten
10:20—Olympic Games
02:15—Varieties
06:10—Closing

TUESDAY
2:45—Opening
2:50—Olympic Games
7:00—News in French
7:15—Olympic Games
8:00—Varieties
8:25—Olympic Games
10:00—News at Ten
10:20—Olympic Games
02:05—Varieties
02:25—Olympic Games
06:10—Closing



Olympic Games

WEDNESDAY
3:45—Opening
3:50—Olympic Games
7:00—News in French
7:20—Olympic Games
10:00—News at Ten
10:20—Olympic Games
02:15—Varieties
02:25—Olympic Games
06:35—Closing

THURSDAY
3:15—Opening
3:20—Olympic Games
7:00—News in French
7:15—Olympic Games
10:00—News at Ten

10:20—Olympic Games
05:25—Closing

FRIDAY
2:45—Opening
2:50—Olympic Games
7:00—News in French
7:15—Olympic Games
10:00—News at Ten
10:20—Olympic Games
06:00—Closing

SAMEDI
5:00—Dessins animés
5:15—Emission jeunesse

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

La vie devant moi
5:30—Jeux
Pyramide
6:00—Série
Château Vallon
7:00—Le journal
7:15—Faut pas rêver
—L'Inde—

DIMANCHE
5:00—Dessins animés
5:15—Emission jeunesse
La vie devant moi
5:30—Jeux
Pyramide
6:00—Magazine
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Cinema

"RUMBLE IN THE BRONX" (New Line, \$102.65): He's been an international superstar for a long time, but action icon Jackie Chan had a hard time cracking the American market... until this showcase for his abilities was released. Doing all of his own stunts, he plays a Hong Kong policeman who travels to New York City to help a shopkeeper (Anita Mui) in warding off a gang of vicious extortionists. *** (R: AS, P, V)

"ANGELS AND INSECTS" (Evergreen, \$98.32): Based on A.S. Byatt's novel "Morpho Eugenia," this sensual drama features Kristin Scott Thomas ("Mission: Impossible," "Four Weddings and a Funeral") as a member of an upper-class family of the 19th century that gets an addition via marriage... a biologist (Mark Rylance) who discovers that the members aren't quite what they seem. Patsy Kensit also stars. *** (R: AS, P, V)

HELD OVER: "BROKEN ARROW" (Fox, \$105.51): John Travolta plays a villain for a change in Hong Kong director John Woo's ("Hard Target") action-crammed tale, about an Air Force pilot who steals a Stealth plane to sell off the nuclear weapons it holds. Christian Slater also stars as a fellow aviator betrayed by the bad guy, and determined to dismantle the scheme with assistance from a park ranger (Samantha Mathis). *** (R: AS, P, V)

"THE CROSSING GUARD" (Miramax, \$100.71): Actor Sean Penn wrote and directed this revenge-themed melodrama, starring Jack Nicholson as a troubled man who spends a number of years plotting his own method of getting even with the person (David Morse) who killed his daughter while driving drunk. "Forrest Gump's" Robin Wright, who's now Penn's wife, and Anjelica Huston also appear. *** (R: AS, P, V)

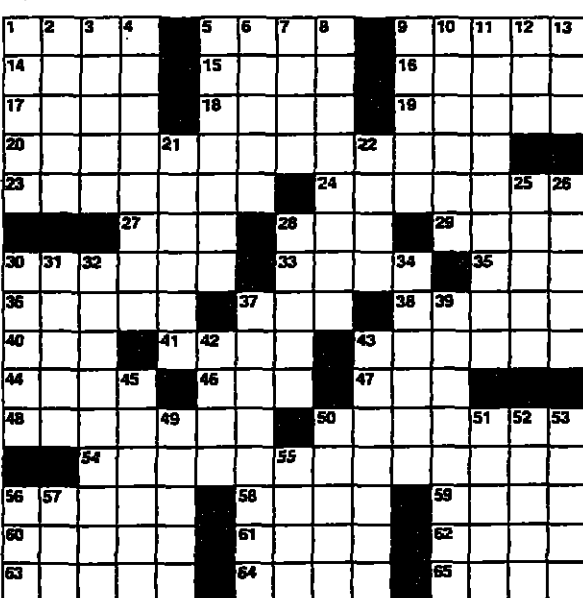
"ALEX" (Orion, \$91.04): Undeniably well-timed for its video release, since the start of the Olympic Games is just around the corner, this New Zealand-Australia co-production focuses on an ambitious young swimmer (played by Lauren Jackson) who intends to land a place on her country's team in 1960. However, she doesn't foresee her height and a competitor becoming problems: Chris Haywood also stars. *** (Not rated: P)

COMING SOON: "GEORGIA" (Miramax, July 23): Jennifer Jason Leigh plays the needy, envious sister of a popular singer (Oscar nominee Mare Winningham) in the acclaimed drama. (R)

"IT'S MY PARTY" (MGM/UA, July 23): A man dying of AIDS decides to give himself a party before ending his own life: Gregory Harrison and Olivia Newton-John appear. (R)

FAMILY VIEWING GUIDE KEY: AS, adult situations; N, nudity; P, profanity; V, violence; GV, particularly graphic violence.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS
1 Pioneer
5 Dam it
9 Polo
13 Vaccine
14 Old style
15 Sword
17 Zhigago's
18 Actress
19 Studied
20 Troopship
23 Meeting
24 Large
27 Reply, abbr.
28 The sun
29 Coward
30 Purly
33 Actor Joel
35 Through
36 Novelist
37 Caviar
38 Resisted
40 Beetle
41 Darling
42 Rough
44 "— boy"
46 Bakery
47 Make a
48 Get off the
49 Santa Fe
50 Blow —
51 (rant)
54 Cargo boats
56 Famous
58 Comedian
59 Johnson
60 Lovess
61 Eye liquid
62 Eng. legis.
63 body
64 Overweight
65 Enervates
66 Hit hard
67 Mixologist
68 Feminine
69 Band the
70 Canned
71 Native of
72 Lard
73 Coin toss
74 Flash
75 Food
76 Make a
77 point
78 Emulate
79 Draft beer
80 Of abb and
81 low
82 Musical
83 Sacred
84 Neighbor-
85 hood
86 Fuss
87 Disorderly
88 group

—THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: Shopping expeditions will cost more than expected, so take care.

Aries (March 21-April 19): You may wish you could call in sick. A hangover's not a good excuse. Your spirits rise as a good-looking friend becomes interested.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): You're sharp as a tack — try something difficult. Your house needs attention. Also listen patiently to a friend's gripes.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): Call in money others owe you. Household chores interfere with your fun.

Cancer (June 22-July 22): Your intuition's right on target. Take notes. Beware of a friend who wants to spend your money.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Hustle to get overdue material out pronto. You're more in control, although you can't do everything you want. Seek a powerful person's private advice.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Tell your problems to your friends — they'll help you out of a jam. To please a demanding person, you'll have to follow orders exactly.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): There may be an oral exam. You're being graded on your appearance too, so look sharp. You and your team can accomplish great things.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): An older person will want to order you around. Better comply. You're gaining valuable experience.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Ask an expert to help you hide your money. Jog or bicycle further than you've ever gone before.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Go along with your mate's decision. Put money into savings and settle financial disputes. Plan ahead so you can start your weekend travel.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You have more than you can handle. Give it your best shot. Delegate some chores.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): Make plans with your sweetheart concerning family matters. Work for the money. Adopt a strict budget.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: You know what to do so stop worrying and get started! You're authorized to buy a big ticket item this year. Shop wisely.

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Bridge

Two for the Price of One
By Tannah Hirsch

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ A Q 8 6 2
♥ A K J
♦ A Q 4
♣ 10 3

WEST
♠ 3
♥ 10 7 4 3 2
♦ J 6 5 2
♣ K 6 2

SOUTH
♠ K 4
♥ Q 9 8
♦ Q 7 3
♣ A Q 8 5 4

The bidding:
North East South West
1♠ Pass 2NT Pass
6NT

Opening lead: Three of ♣
Pay careful attention to your spot-cards. That proved to be the key to success on this deal.

North-South got to slam the direct way. With South showing 13-15 points and a balanced hand, North knew the pair's combined assets were enough for a small slam and no more.

West led a heart, taken in dummy. There were 10 fast tricks available

and, if spades divided evenly, that would produce the two tricks required. If spades were 4-2, declarer could set up a long spade, and the slam would then depend on the club finesse.

Declarer crossed to the king of spades and continued with a spade to the ace. The 5-1 split was demoralizing. Now it seemed that declarer needed not only a successful club finesse, but a 3-3 split in the suit as well. The fate of the hand was soon settled. Declarer led a club to the queen and, when that lost, the contract went down the drain.

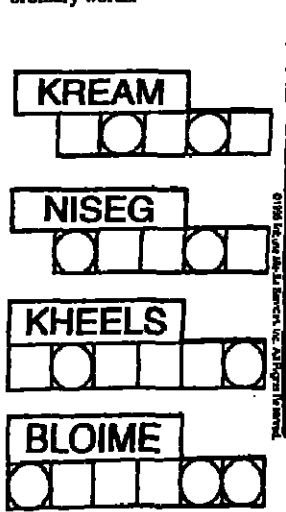
Let's look a little deeper in the club situation. The ten of clubs on the table and the eight in hand give declarer an additional chance that could be tested without cost. At trick four South should have led the ten of clubs from the board, with the intention of running it.

As the cards lie, if East does not cover the club, West will be forced to win the king. When clubs break well, 12 tricks are easy. But even after East covers with the jack and the queen loses to the king, all is not lost.

Suppose West returns a safe heart. Dummy wins, the three of clubs is led and the eight is finessed. With the nine outside and the suit splitting 3-3, the slam limps home.

Jumble

Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer here: A

Answers: MAKER SINGE SHEKEL MOBILE

Words of Wisdom

Freedom exists in learning to think for yourself.

Panic is the result of a stampede of reason.

Prevention is always easier — and cheaper — than remedy.

If you want to be a better thinker, be a better self-examiner.

Words, once unleashed, cannot be called back.

Just because you know how to make a living doesn't mean you know how to live.

Acts of kindness may not receive a lot of attention at the time, but they are never forgotten.

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An evening of masterful performance

AMMAN (Star)—By every standard, the evening of chamber music held by the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR) at Darat Al Funun was splendid. The concert was in cooperation with the National Music Conservatory/Noor Al Hussein Foundation.

The success of the evening of musical enchantment lies not only in the masterful performance of the group, but in its well chosen venue.

In scorching summer days in Amman, there is hardly any place that is more fitting for outdoor music than this artistic site. At the moderately spaced ground at Darat Al Funun, the harmonic sounds of musical instruments and acoustics are more enhanced. The music played by the group was most exciting as it's often gemmed up with the wind which jubilantly sways the surrounding trees.

This highly impressive concert marks the first joint venture between ACOR and the National Music Conservatory. It was a result of an ACOR-sponsored project by Dr. Philip Posey, who was in Jordan on a two-month stay for an investigation into Jordan's contemporary and traditional music.

Included in the six-man musical group was Dr. Posey, his wife Ann and daughter, Dawn. Also in the group was Mohammed Othman Sidqi, the conductor of the National Music Conservatory together with Ali Musa and Shadia Haddad.

Dr. Posey, who said he worked extensively during his two-month stay with both the army and NMC orchestras, explained that the main objective of his stay was not only an investigation into contemporary and traditional music but to also set-up in Amman a center where traditional music can be preserved.

Posey expressed deep concern for the country's already fading old traditional music, especially the bedouin one. He believes it is imperative not only to preserve it but also to revive it.

The center will hold libraries for both books and videos on the preservation of traditional music, and a museum where traditional musical instruments can be displayed. "The general idea is to have a place where people can learn how to preserve it."

This is the first step towards ACOR and NMC co-sponsored program of preservation. Posey said he was quite impressed with the hospitality, cooperation and dedication of those he had worked with. "We like Jordan very much, its people are wonderful," he said. "The musicians I have worked with are great, for they are first-rate."



● Ingrid Liedgens, first secretary of the German Embassy in Amman cuts a cake presented by the Forte Grand Hotel in celebration of Germany's victory of the European cup '96

Journalain

Supplément en français du Star

Une possible rencontre entre MM. Arafat et Netanyahu

Le principal adjoint du président palestinien Yasser Arafat a déclaré mardi qu'une rencontre entre Yasser Arafat (notre photo) et Benjamin Netanyahu pourrait prochainement avoir lieu. «J'estime qu'il y aura bientôt une rencontre entre le président Arafat et Benjamin Netanyahu», a déclaré Mahmoud Abbas à l'issue d'un entretien entre MM. Arafat et le chef de la diplomatie israélienne David Levy à Beit Hanoun dans la bande Gaza. «Le principal résultat de cette rencontre, c'est la création d'un cadre de négociations» entre Israël et les Palestiniens a ajouté M. Mazen. Ce rendez-vous était historique pour la droite israélienne qui s'était jusqu'à présent opposée à tout contact avec l'O.L.P. Le Premier ministre israélien Benjamin Netanyahu a salué cette importante rencontre, estimant qu'elle permettait «l'ouverture d'un canal de discussions entre les Israéliens et les Palestiniens». Déclarant qu'il entendait appliquer les engagements pris par Israël dans le cadre du processus de paix et poursuivre ce processus, il a affirmé être prêt à rencontrer Yasser Arafat «si cela doit servir les intérêts et la sécurité d'Israël».



SELON MOI

Le moins que

l'on puisse dire pour décrire la phase critique que la Jordanie traverse depuis plusieurs mois, c'est que le climat social n'est pas franchement au beau fixe et que la mauvaise foi domine dans le pays. Il y a comme un mauvais vent qui propulse dans nos poumons une odeur perdue jusqu'alors inconnue.

Le Jordanien se réveille chaque matin pour découvrir des journaux crachant la haine de quelques analphabètes et héros en cartons, et écouter des discours qui peuvent l'inconscience de ceux qui aiment mêler aux sons des clairons le battement des tambours. Comme si la Jordanie était au bord de la gâgne. Et du haut de nos collines on peut entendre l'écho des chants funèbres de républicains corbeaux annonçant l'heure et le lieu de nos funérailles.

Messieurs, vous qui semez la discorde, vous qui divisez, aujourd'hui cette Jordanie pour mieux l'affaiblir, sachez que notre pays n'a pas encore rendu l'âme et que le temps n'est pas venu de se partager sa dépouille.

Certes il y a un malaise. Sans doute existe-t-il une crise de confiance entre les citoyens et ceux qui les gouvernent. Indiscutablement, beaucoup se sentent trompés, dupés voire trahis et ne voient de la prospérité annoncée que des mirages, réalisant que cet obscur tunnel dans lequel ils se trouvent est interminable. Mais le peuple jordanien n'est pas dupe et il sait que qu'il n'est pas le seul peuple à être dans la tourmente. C'est pour cela qu'il ne va pas être l'auteur de sa propre perte.

Si le Jordanien sait brillamment dissimuler, ses peines en sachant que de nombreux ennemis guettent sa colombe, il est en droit d'exiger de ne pas être pris pour un imbécile par ses tuteurs. Il a notamment besoin d'être convaincu en des termes simples de la nécessité de tripler le prix du pain. Il veut comprendre pourquoi cette mesure sauvera l'économie nationale alors que dans d'autres domaines, la satisfaction engendre presque l'impunité.

Si le gouvernement est sincère et déterminé à ne pas devenir l'ennemi des gouvernés, s'il jure d'effacer toute crainte pour que le citoyen pauvre puisse dormir sur ses deux oreilles, s'il garantit aux plus démunis que cette décision n'est pas la première étape qui fera d'eux des mendicants attirés par des coups d'imaginaire, le nuage actuel laissera la place à un beau ciel bleu, et ceci à la grande déception des ennemis jurés de ce petit pays.

Le philosophe stoïcien Sénèque disait: «La raison veut décider ce qui est juste alors que la colère veut qu'on trouve juste ce qu'elle a décidé». La colère est certes un court instant de folie et la parole, celle qui guérit et non celle qui provoque, peut apaiser la tension et calmer les ardeurs. Mais encore faut-il, comme le disait Sénèque, «que les ventres affamés aient des oreilles».

Souhail Al Sweis

Le Jourdain,
on y revient
Tous les jeudis
dans le Star
645380

Hervé de Charette

La France se montre disponible

Lors d'un court passage mardi en Jordanie, le ministre français des Affaires étrangères Hervé de Charette, en tournée trois jours au Proche-Orient, a rappelé la contribution que la France pouvait apporter dans la poursuite, voire la relance, du processus de paix.

La tournée que le ministre français des Affaires étrangères, Hervé de Charette, a terminée hier en Egypte avait des allures de marathon. Le programme de cette tournée l'a amené tout d'abord en Syrie, puis au Liban, en Jordanie, dans les territoires palestiniens, en Israël et enfin en Egypte. Cette véritable course contre la montre ne lui a permis de rester que quatre heures mardi en Jordanie, le temps d'un déjeuner de travail avec le prince héritier Hassan puis d'une rencontre avec le Premier ministre jordanien Abdelkarim Kabariti. En convalescence à Londres, le roi Hussein n'était lui pas présent dans le pays au moment de cette visite.

Hervé de Charette avait trois objectifs pour cette tournée proche-orientale. Il souhaitait tout d'abord «sonder les dirigeants de la région». Ensuite, il tenait à «rappeler ce que sont les positions françaises et les positions européennes concernant le processus de paix. Il peut y avoir des changements de positions dans tel ou tel pays, notamment à la suite d'élections législatives. Mais il n'y aura pas de changement de la position française et de la position européenne: cette position est inspirée, comme elle l'a toujours été, par la stricte application et le respect des résolutions du Conseil de sécurité. Elle est fondée sur le respect des engagements déjà souscrits et la poursuite du processus de paix. Enfin, elle est guidée par des principes désormais établis, à savoir en particulier le droit à l'autodétermination des Palestiniens et le principe de l'échange de la terre contre la paix».

Enfin, il entendait «rappeler la détermination de la France à apporter sa contribution à la poursuite, et le cas échéant, à

la reprise du processus de paix dans les mois qui viennent. Une participation française que je crois utile pour la réussite de ce processus de paix dans l'intérêt de l'ensemble des parties».

La France, qui a joué un rôle primordial dans la signature du cessez-le-feu entre Israël et le Liban au mois d'avril dernier, entend bien continuer à participer au règlement politique des conflits de cette région. «Dans le déroulement du processus de paix, il ne peut pas y avoir un canal unique de négociations. Je suis partisan de la théorie du double canal. Nous ne prétendons à aucun monopole. Ça n'aurait aucun sens. Mais nous pensons que nous pouvons apporter une contribution importante à côté des autres à la reprise du processus de paix et à son bon aboutissement». Le fait que le négociateur américain Dennis Ross décide d'entamer le même jour que lui sa visite au Proche-Orient ne traduit, selon Hervé de Charette, aucune rivalité franco-américaine: «avec les Etats-Unis, la France souhaite évidemment travailler en pleine concertation et en pleine coordination. (...) Il ne faut pas voir de la compétition là où il n'y a que de la concertation».

Au cours de ses différents entretiens en Jordanie, Hervé de Charette a pu constater que «les positions jordanien, les positions françaises et européennes sont extrêmement proches pour ne pas dire les mêmes. Je crois que la Jordanie a un rôle extrêmement important dans le nouveau contexte qui suit les élections israéliennes». Déclarant à propos des réactions qui ont suivi le scrutin israélien que «l'on a toujours tort de se mêler des élections des autres», il a expliqué que «la France prend les choses comme elles sont, au



Hervé de Charette, ministre français des Affaires étrangères, lors de sa conférence de presse mardi à Amman.

nom du principe de réalité. Elle ne renonce à rien, ne change aucune de ses idées, n'abandonne aucun de ses principes. Mais elle est disponible».

L'affection particulière de la France

Elle s'est en effet montrée disponible et décidée à rencontrer tous les protagonistes de la région au cours de cette tournée. Pour cela, la France a dû se livrer à un périlleux exercice diplomatique. Ne souhaitant pas heurter Benjamin Netanyahu qui s'oppose à toute visite de ministre des Affaires étrangères à la Maison d'Orient, le siège officiel de l'O.L.P. à Jérusalem, tout en affirmant ne «céder à aucune pression», Hervé de Charette a finalement évité cette étape à risques. Le directeur de la Maison d'Orient Fayçal Hussein n'étant pas à Jérusalem lors de la visite du ministre français, seuls des collaborateurs d'Hervé de Charette s'y sont finalement rendus pour rencontrer des responsables palestiniens. «Nous avons toujours veillé à manifester à l'égard de la Maison d'Orient

la considération qui lui revient (...) Une institution, parmi d'autres d'ailleurs, qui représente la vie des Palestiniens de Jérusalem Est». Une décision qu'Hervé de Charette a ensuite défendue à Gaza où il a rencontré Yasser Arafat, déclarant «qu'il n'y a pas et qu'il n'y aura aucun changement dans la position française à l'égard de la Maison d'Orient».

Au cours de cette tournée au Proche-Orient, Hervé de Charette, qui était le premier ministre européen des Affaires étrangères à se rendre en Israël depuis l'élection de M. Netanyahu, souhaitait notamment rappeler «l'affection particulière et extrêmement forte» que la France a pour cette partie du monde. A peine de retour à Paris, lui et ses collaborateurs se replongeront d'ailleurs dans un des dossiers brûlants de la région: la première réunion du comité de surveillance du cessez-le-feu israélo-libanais, dont la France assure la présidence au côté des Etats-Unis, ayant lieu aujourd'hui.

Olivier Bras

Jérash 1996

Le festival s'offre une grande deuxième semaine

Alors qu'il entre dans sa deuxième semaine, le festival de Jérash peut déjà se féliciter d'avoir offert quelques grandes soirées au public jordanien, comme les concerts de la chanteuse libanaise Majdah el Roumi. Une ambiance qui ne devrait pas retomber avec la venue cette semaine, notamment, du chanteur égyptien Moustafa Kamar.

Comme tous les peuples ayant subi pas mal de conflits et de crises, les Jordaniens ont donné d'eux l'image d'un peuple sérieux et triste. Le festival de Jérash contredit fortement une telle idée. Quand on observe la foule se dirigeant vers l'ancienne ville romaine au moment du coucher du soleil, on réalise que ce peuple a envie de se distraire en profitant d'une occasion grandiose comme celle du festival de Jérash.

L'organisation s'est attachée à bien répartir les activités nationales et internationales tout au long de la ville romaine. Le Forum, illuminé pendant les quinze jours du festival, ne se vide pas des amateurs d'art folklorique venant chaque soir de différents pays. D'un côté du Forum se trouve la cave de Zeus où une exposition présente des chefs d'oeuvre de peinture de plusieurs artistes du monde arabe ainsi qu'un certain nombre de costumes traditionnels. Vers la rue des colonnades les artisans de Palestine, des

Emirats et de Jordanie se suivent, créant une sorte de continuité entre la tradition d'autrefois et l'adaptation qui en est faite aujourd'hui.

Un café arabe a été reconstitué au milieu des colonnades, juste à côté des artisans jordanien, pour permettre aux visiteurs de savourer la beauté de lieux légendés par de glorieux ancêtres. Un narghileh et une tasse de thé à la menthe livrent alors des secrets d'ivresse au son de l'air frais soufflant entre les colonnes de l'Histoire.

Le théâtre d'Artémis a accueilli pendant deux soirées une troupe anglaise, *Odd Socks*, qui a adapté un texte de Shakespeare pour des spectateurs de 21ème siècle. Ce théâtre verra cette semaine trois troupes de tarab venant de Syrie, du Maroc et d'Irak, se succéder. Le tarab est un chant qui met l'auditeur en extase avec des paroles provoquant des sentiments de joie ou de tristesse. «Chacun essaie de présenter le meilleur spectacle aux spectateurs, en gardant à l'esprit

que l'on joue devant notre conscience et devant Dieu», explique Majdah el Roumi, la chanteuse libanaise qui a enflammé la première semaine du festival de Jérash avec deux concerts exceptionnels. Majdah el Roumi utilise sa voix pour faire passer un message politique, luttant pour une coexistence pacifique de tous les peuples dans la dignité.

La foule a fait la queue pendant plus de deux heures avant le début de ses spectacles. Plus de sept mille spectateurs n'ont cessé de chanter et de danser avec cette grande vedette arabe. Une telle ambiance est précieuse pour la venue cette semaine du chanteur égyptien Moustafa Kamar. C'est un public encore plus jeune et enthousiaste qui devrait garnir les gradins de l'amphithéâtre romain ce soir et demain.

Pour les touristes se rendant à Jérash, la programmation du festival a inclus deux chanteurs du Golfe. Mohamed el Mazem et Ahlam ont donné deux concerts d'une grande qualité. Leur musique, très éloignée du rythme des chansons moyen-orientales, a réuni un grand nombre de spectateurs

du Golfe. Avec le chanteur syrien Sabah Fakhri, la chanson traditionnelle du Moyen-Orient reviendra à l'honneur, dimanche et lundi.

Sur les planches, le public pourra notamment apprécier le théâtre du Libanais Chérif Khaznadar, présent à Jérash avec une troupe française (voir encadré).

Les enfants sont eux aussi bien présents à Jérash. Sur scène, tout d'abord, avec la Maîtrise des Hauts de Seine, une chorale française rassemblant 65 enfants sous la direction du chef de chœur Francis Barod. Mais aussi dans les gradins, un certain nombre de spectacle leur étant destinés, essentiellement au théâtre Garasia.

L'ambiance du festival est elle-même un vrai spectacle: l'écho des différents spectacles, l'odeur des narghileh, les ballons multicolores des enfants, les barbe-à-papa et les vendeurs de café arabe sentant la cardamome produisent un tableau qui, à lui seul, mérite le déplacement à Jérash.

Oroub el Abed

Julia Domna l'Impératrice

Que se passe-t-il lorsque des étrangers prennent la tête d'un grand empire? Julia Domna est une pièce inspirée de la vie de l'impératrice romaine Julia Domna, femme de l'empereur Septime Sévère. Grâce à leur enthousiasme et leurs efforts, ces deux étrangers venant des colonies ont réussi à diriger l'empire romain.

Une histoire qui évoque le long parcours d'amour et de sang, de guerres et de complot, qui a fait de deux enfants de l'Orient les maîtres de Rome puis les a écrasés, eux et leurs fils, sous la barbarie des ambitions rivales. Ainsi vient-elle, cette femme, se sacrifier aux pieds de la déesse Ashtar, pour que sa descendance retrouve le pouvoir. Appel qui sera entendu puisque les «Impératrices syriennes» régneront sur Rome pendant quarante-deux ans (193-235). Une pièce de Françoise Gründ et Chérif Khaznadar, jouée en arabe par Mireille Maalout et Ninar Esber. Les 28, 29 et 30 juillet au théâtre Artémis à partir de 20h30.

Syndicat de la presse jordanienne

Des dossiers pressants

Nouveau président du syndicat de la presse jordanienne, Seif Al-Sharif débute son mandat avec un certain nombre de dossiers brûlants à traiter, dont la nouvelle mise en détention d'un journaliste.

Seif Al-Sharif est le nouveau président du Syndicat de la presse jordanienne (SPJ) depuis trois semaines, après avoir été quatre ans vice-président de ce syndicat. C'est un homme qui connaît bien le milieu du journalisme car il a été directeur du *Jérusalem Star* et dirige aujourd'hui le quotidien *Al-Dustour*.

Son élection a été le fruit d'un large consensus: il a été élu au premier tour de scrutin avec 170 voix, alors que les quatre autres candidats en totalisaient 140. Une première dans l'histoire de ce syndicat formé en 1953. «Certaines personnes ont protesté contre mon élection en disant qu'un directeur de journal ne pouvait pas occuper le poste de président du syndicat», explique Seif Al-Sharif avec un sourire entendu. «Mais un bon directeur de journal peut faire un bon directeur de syndicat».

Son programme comporte dix points. Il s'est notamment engagé à améliorer la retraite des journalistes, à leur assurer un salaire minimum de 200 dinars par mois, à construire un centre d'hébergement, à travailler sur une nouvelle loi garantissant aux journalistes une certaine place dans la société, et enfin à renforcer le rôle des professionnels syndiqués dans les agences de presse nationales et internationales.

Il espère ainsi améliorer le niveau de ce «métier sacré» et resserrer les rangs des journalistes face aux difficultés qu'ils peuvent rencontrer dans l'exercice de leur profession. Le plus important pour Seif Al-Sharif, à l'heure actuelle, est de construire une nouvelle maison de la presse, le roi Hussein ayant promis 100 000 dinars pour la financer.

A l'ordre du jour se trouve bien sûr la négociation sur le nouveau projet de loi du SPJ



Seif Al-Sharif

que le gouvernement a présenté le 8 juillet. Un projet que le SPJ souhaiterait modifier. Parmi les points litigieux se trouve la définition du journaliste, qui, pour le SPJ, ne concerne que les journalistes de presse écrite et non ceux des autres médias. «contrairement à l'interprétation large qu'en fait le gouvernement».

Les conditions d'adhésion au syndicat font aussi l'objet d'une polémique: le syndicat insiste pour que celui-ci soit titulaire d'un diplôme universitaire et pratique cette profession à l'exclusion de tout autre métier. Enfin, la composition du conseil de discipline du syndicat oppose le SPJ et le gouvernement: le SPJ refuse en effet que des juges en fassent partie, préférant qu'il soit constitué de journalistes membres depuis au moins quinze ans du syndicat.

«Sur les 45 articles du projet de loi, nous en avons accepté 28 sans aucune modification», explique Seif Al-Sharif. «Les divergences sont donc limitées».

Le sujet de la liberté d'expression fait partie de ses points à discuter. «Chaque pays a ses particularités», explique Seif Al-Sharif. «Dans un pays conservateur comme la Jordanie, tout n'est pas permis. C'est vrai que cela peut paraître contraire au principe

de la liberté d'expression. Mais, par exemple, il faut respecter la religion. Or, certaines publications, en particulier des hebdomadaires, exploitent des sujets immoraux ou sensationnels pour vendre plus. De plus, la Jordanie est un mélange de populations différentes. Si ce fragile tissu s'abîme, c'est l'unité elle-même qui est en danger. En cas de dépassement de ces limites, nous ne souhaitons pas de sanction judiciaire. Nous avertissons le rédacteur en chef du journal concerné pour qu'il prenne les mesures nécessaires».

Seif Al-Sharif a obtenu du ministre de l'Information la promesse que des journalistes ne seraient pas arrêtés pour leurs idées ou pour ce qu'ils écrivent. «Nasser Kamach, le rédacteur en chef de *La Voix de la femme*, a été arrêté et placé en détention samedi pour avoir publié un article sur la dégradation des mœurs en basse-ville. Nous avons demandé au ministère de le relâcher. Avec le temps, nous espérons que ce genre de situation disparaîtra».

Le nouveau président du SPJ a confiance dans la presse jordanienne, qui, selon lui, est sur le bon chemin. «La presse hebdomadaire et la presse quotidienne se complètent. Il n'y a pas de concurrence entre elles. La presse quotidienne est conservatrice, les hebdomadaires étant eux téméraires».

Pour lui, l'explosion des périodiques, même ceux qui ont un caractère sensationnel, est une bonne chose qui promet, pour l'avenir, une presse de qualité, une fois que les lecteurs auront fait leur choix. «C'est une preuve de vitalité. Il ne faut pas juger maintenant cette nouvelle presse. Attendez cinq ans, et vous verrez que nous aurons beaucoup avancé».

Mona Qaddoumi

Le programme du festival de Jérash du 25 au 31 juillet

Au théâtre sud

A partir de 20h30

25/26 juillet

le chanteur Mustafa Kamar (Egypte)

27 juillet

la troupe folklorique arménienne Nour Sironte (Syrie)

28/29 juillet

le chanteur Sabah Fakhri (Syrie)

30/31 juillet

The Cavern Beatles (Angleterre)

Au théâtre Artémis

A partir de 20h30

25 juillet

La troupe de 12 de Hussein al Adami (Irak)

26/27 juillet

Pièce de théâtre Media interprétée par l'association des artistes jordaniens

28/29/30 juillet

Pièce de théâtre Julia Domna (France)

31 juillet

Chorale, La maîtrise des Hauts-de-Seine (France)

Au théâtre de sons et lumières

A partir de 20h30

26 juillet

La troupe de l'Université d'Amman

27/28 juillet

la troupe folklorique Kokkeltaler (Allemagne)

29/30 juillet

La troupe de danse folklorique de Tai-pei (Taiwan)

31 juillet

La troupe folklorique The



De nombreuses activités ont lieu pour les enfants au théâtre Garasia

Family international (Etats-Unis)

26 et 31 juillet

21h30: Soirée chansons par Haitham Shomali (Jordanie)

27/28 juillet

20h00: Soirée musicale par Haitham Amer et son groupe (Jordanie)

27/28/29/30 juillet

21h30: Théâtre *Al thour ya maolana* (Jordanie)

29/30 juillet

20h00: Soirée musicale par Rami Shafik et son groupe (Jordanie)

31 juillet

20h00: Soirée poésies

Au Palais de la culture (Amman)

25/26/27 juillet

20h00: La compagnie libanaise Caracalla présente *Elisabeth* de *Carl Hagen*



Les artisans se succèdent tout au long de l'ancienne voie romaine de Jérash.

Activities

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British Council	636147/8	Philadelphia Cinema	634144
French Cultural Centre	637009		
Goethe Institute	641993		
Cervantes Institute (Spanish)	610858		
Turkish Cultural Centre	639777		
Royal Arts Centre	665195		
Y.W.C.A.	641793		
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Information	641467	Transport	641461
Interior Ministry	663111	Water & Irrigation	680100
Justice	663101	Youth / University	604701

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Australian	673246/7
Austrian	644635
Bahraini	664148/9
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Belgian	675683
Bulgarian	818151
Canadian	666124
Chilean	823360
Cyprus Honorary Cons	677559
Czech	671813/666135
Danish Consulate Gen	603703
Finnish Consulate	824654/824676
French	641273/4
German	689351
Greek	671331/2
Hungarian	815614
Icelandic Consulate	698851
Indian	637262
Indonesian	828911
Iran	639331
Italian	638185
Japanese	672486/7
Kuwaiti	67135/8
Libyan	693101/3
Lebanese	641381
Moroccan	641451
Netherlands	619699 / 619693
New Zealand Consulate	636720
North Korean	666349
Norwegian Embassy	644932/4
Omani	686155
Pakistan	622787
Palestine	677517
People's Rep. of China	666139
Philippines	645161
Polish	637153
Qatari	682666
Romanian	667738
Russian	641158
Saudi Arabian	814154/6
Slovenian Honorary Cons	861542
Sri Lanka Consulate	645312
South Korean	660745/6
South Africa	811194
Spanish	614166/9
Sudanese	644251/2
Swedish	669177/9
Swiss	686416/7
Syrian	641076
Taiwan	671530
Tunisian	674307/8
Turkish	641251
U.A.E.	643347/643341
United Kingdom	823100
United States	820101
Yemen	642381
EEC Delegation	668191
ESCWA	694351/8
ICRC	688645
UNDP/WFP	668171/7
UNRWA	607398
UNICEF	629571
UNESCO	606559

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British Midland	694802
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Delta Air Lines	643661
Egypt Air	630011
Emirates	643341
Gulf Air	653613
Hungarian Airlines	622275
Iberia	637827/644036
Iran Air	622826
Japan Air Lines	630879
KLM	622175
Korean Airlines	676624/662236
Libyan Arab Airlines	643831/2
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Malaysian Airline	639575/653446
MEA	636104
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Polish Airlines	625981
Qantas	862288
Royal Jordanian	678321
Saudia	639333
Scandinavian Airlines	604499
Singapore Airlines	676177
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Swiss Air (G.S.A.)	659791/641906
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Civil Defence H.Q.	193/198/199
Fire Brigade	622090/93
Ambulance	199
Blood Bank	775121
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Traffic Accidents	897467/8
Highway Police	787111

Hospitals

Akleh Maternity	642441/2
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664164/6
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Al-Muasher Hospital	667227/9
Amal Hospital	674155
Army, Marka	891611/5
Hussein Medical Centre	813813
Italian-Al-Muhareb	777010/3
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Khaled Maternity	642816
Malhas, J. Amman	636141
Palestine, Shmeisani	664171/4
Queen Alia Hospital	602340/50
Shmeisani Hospital	607431
The Islamic, Abdali	668127/37
University Hospital	845845

General

Amman Municipality	843402
Electricity Complaints	121
Prices complaints	666181
Hotel complaints	08/53200
Sewerage Complaints	896390
Water Complaints	656390/91
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THE STAR'S

WORKSTATION
COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

A futuristic bliss that merges computers and telecommunications:

Work from home, with Teleworking

By Jawad Abbassi
Special to The Star

THERE EXISTS one subtle similarity between the Latin language and technology: that is flexibility. Latin allows for the flexible uniting of different words to produce new words, and technology allows and progresses towards merging its different areas, to end up with more useful applications.

This similarity turned out to be very useful. Latin was never at a loss in churning out new words to describe the new technological advances. First was the Telegraph then the Telephone and now the latest word of all: Telework.

Telework, as defined by the Frankfurt based Information Technology Observatory (ITO), is working in the house for at least one day during normal working hours. The teleworker could be a private entrepreneur or an employee in a very big firm. Also, teleworkers differ from home workers in that they utilize information technology appliances (i.e. computers, modems and phone lines), to connect with their offices for information or for submitting performed tasks.

An example for Teleworking would be a situation where salespersons don't go to the office in the morning to gather needed information for certain offers, but download all required information from their companies' servers and prepare the offers at home to send them directly to the clients.

As such, Teleworking could have many advantages on both

the macro and micro levels. One macro level advantage would be reducing traffic congestion and its associated stress, as less people would be driving to work every day. Other micro level effects include eliminating the pains of wearing suits and ties



very early in the morning, knowing that the appointment with the client is still five hours away, and increasing the time that parents have to be in the house to solve their children's problems.

The concept of Teleworking is gaining wide appeal in North America, basically because the US and Canada have witnessed the high profile spread of the Internet, which familiarized North Americans with computers and modems (basically the same "appliances" used for Teleworking).

Thus, companies only needed to set up a private "mini Internet" for their workers to log into and do their work from their homes. Xerox and AT&T are pursuing this with vigor. AT&T already has some 47,000 Teleworkers and Xerox has started the probationary testing of converting all its

Have you noticed:
Everyone is talking about the Internet and on-line services. The Workstation page is turning into the forum for these topics.
Fax us on 648298 or email us at Star@NETS.com.Jo with your views. We and our readers want to know them.

There's more to the Internet than WWW

A dear reader, Mr. Dan Gamber, wrote us his views on Mr. Jawad Abbassi's article on "The ever blurring line of distinction", published on 4 July.

The history of the Internet prior to 1993 has no practical significance for Jordan, nor does a discussion of services such as AOL. However, your statement that "prior to the 1993 introduction of the attractive World Wide Web on the Internet, the Internet was the exclusive domain of research students and academia centers" is not only flat wrong but also grossly distorts the present state of the Internet. And by telling your readers that the WWW is the only thing that is of interest, you deny them the real meat of the Internet—particularly as long as Web access from Jordan is at the best so slow that only a stoic will try it for long. Only a tiny part of the use of the Internet is for the Web. For exchanging information on thousands of topics of interest to millions of people, mailing lists and newsgroups (USENET) are far more important. If you are interested in (say) lithics (chipped stones) of the neolithic period, you subscribe the Neo-Lith mailing list on a computer at the Free University in Berlin. When someone sends a message (e-mail) to

Neo-Lith, the computer repeats it back out to everyone on the subscription list. USENET newsgroups are similar in form to the conferences on NETS, although most have far more substance. USENET groups are not maintained on one computer, but rather hundreds or thousands. When a message or article is added to the newsgroup on one server, that server automatically spreads it to all the other servers. Both USENET and mailing lists eliminate the exhausting on-line delays of the Web. To get to them, all you have to do is connect to your Internet Service Provider (ISP). This efficiency would be a dream compared to waiting 10 minutes or more for a Web page to load over Global One's overloaded circuits at 11 at night. Another method for spreading information on the Internet is FTP. You can log on to public areas of thousands of computers, browse their file libraries, and download items of interest. This is used particularly for spreading shareware and freeware—software available at little or no charge. The Web is pretty, and its hyperlinks have a great future, but until the communications links between Jordan and the rest of Internet are far better (and cheaper), mailing lists and USENET are the way to go.

Dan Gamber, ACOR

Mr. Abbassi answers:

Your points are well taken, however your main argument seems to revolve around the importance of USENET on the Internet.

While I concede that this is one of the more interesting and useful aspects of the Internet, I didn't concentrate on it because the current ISP in Jordan (Sprint/Go/Jordan) does not offer USENET because of the drain it puts on the narrow bandwidth that they have. I know this for sure because of my contacts with their technical people (apparently, simultaneous news feeds of many USENETS is more demanding on the bandwidth than web browsing). This is why, I concentrated on the aspect of the Internet that Jordanians do know, which is the WWW.

On the AOL issue, I think that a discussion of it was timely because some Jordanians are connecting to the AOL using the TCP/IP link instead of the long distance call method. I had many people asking me of how they could connect to AOL, like they used to do in the States, and the article offered them the way to do it. By the way, I occasionally connect to AOL using my TCP/IP connection with the Local ISP. I hope this clears matters. ■

Intel adopts new pricing practices: Pentium prices to drop this year

INTEL CORP., is adjusting its pricing practices, in an attempt to counter the effect of dropping sales being recorded for home PCs in the USA.

Deep price cuts are expected, which will surpass those previously planned, for some of its Pentium microprocessors towards the end of the year.

Afterwards, it is expected that Intel will maintain steady pricing till the end of 1996, rather than opt for its traditional quarterly price reductions in November.

The cuts will include some of Intel more powerful Pentium chips, paving the way for computer makers to adopt these new processors at the entry-level. Intel is yet to announce the details of these price cuts.

An analyst from DataQuest has provided an interesting report that "Intel's cost of production per chip, almost regardless of the speed, remains roughly \$30. This means that any increase in the volume of sales would be absolutely to Intel's advantage."

Traditionally, Intel cuts prices every three months in order to stimulate market growth. The Pentium 133 MHz chip was

priced at \$935 when it was introduced in June 1995. Today, it sells for \$257. The Pentium 100 MHz chip costs \$134, according to Intel latest price list. Comparatively, the Pentium 166 MHz chip is sold to manufacturers for \$498.

The price-cutting policy this time follows many complaints in the home PC market regarding the drop in sales. The idea is to create a push once again in this market. If anything, the attention Intel is giving to this issue resembles its interest in growing the home PC market. The regular November price-slash is always

on the schedules of computer dealers and distributors who get rid of their PC systems in stock just in time for the price cuts. Then, they acquire large numbers of the cheaper systems, to sell them off during the end of year sales boom.

So far, Intel leads in the Pentium arena, which means that it aims to maximize profits. At this point, this goal will be attained from lowering prices.

For computer buyers, the move spells good news, as they can expect to purchase a PC at substantial savings by the end of the year. ■

Jerash festival into cyberspace

ARABIA ON-Line, the only Internet pan-Arabic service, has signed an agreement with the Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts to give it on-line presence. The agreement will enable the festival a chance to attract worldwide attention. Since Arabia On-Line has more than 7,000 users in Jordan and is visited by all people interested in the Arab world, it is expected to bring a significant boost to the festival's popularity. The festival, which is held annually in the ancient Roman city of Jerash, is one of the most important cultural events in Jordan. It features a wide range of activities, including music, dance, and theater. The festival is a major attraction for tourists and locals alike. The agreement with Arabia On-Line is a significant step towards making the festival more accessible to a wider audience. It will allow visitors to experience the festival's rich cultural heritage from the comfort of their homes. The festival is a testament to Jordan's commitment to preserving its cultural heritage and promoting it to the world. It is a source of pride for the Jordanian people and a major contribution to the country's cultural life. The agreement with Arabia On-Line is a testament to the power of technology in promoting cultural heritage. It shows that even in a digital age, the importance of preserving and promoting cultural heritage remains. The festival is a reminder of the rich cultural heritage of the Arab world and the importance of preserving it for future generations. It is a source of inspiration and pride for all who are part of the Arab world. The agreement with Arabia On-Line is a significant step towards making the festival more accessible to a wider audience. It will allow visitors to experience the festival's rich cultural heritage from the comfort of their homes. The festival is a testament to Jordan's commitment to preserving its cultural heritage and promoting it to the world. It is a source of pride for the Jordanian people and a major contribution to the country's cultural life. The agreement with Arabia On-Line is a testament to the power of technology in promoting cultural heritage. It shows that even in a digital age, the importance of preserving and promoting cultural heritage remains. The festival is a reminder of the rich cultural heritage of the Arab world and the importance of preserving it for future generations. It is a source of inspiration and pride for all who are part of the Arab world.

Even with a bad leg, it was Strug's choice to continue

By Randy Harvey
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

ATLANTA—Long after we have forgotten which country won the medal count and by how much, we remember the moments. Abee Bikela running barefoot through the streets of Rome to win the marathon for Ethiopia. Mary Lou Retton needing a perfect 10 to win the women's gymnastics all-around title in Los Angeles and getting it. Canadian Silken Laumann strapping herself into a rowing shell so that she could hold her shattered leg steady long enough to win a bronze medal in Barcelona.

Amid complaints about buses that either run late, slow or not at all and a computerized results system that is slower than an abacus, Kerri Strug, a 4-foot-9, 90-pound gymnast from Houston, gave us one of those moments Tuesday night at the Georgia Dome. We needed one to remind us that the Olympics are not about transportation and technology but athletes and achievement.

One of the great Olympians, two-time decaathlon gold medalist Daley Thompson of Great Britain, once said that every athlete at one point in his or her career has to stare into the abyss and decide within a matter of moments whether to challenge the darkness.

The last of six US gymnasts on the last apparatus of the team competition, the so-called anchor, Strug had landed after her first vault, heard a pop in her left ankle and fallen to the mat.

Feeling like her entire leg was on fire, she limped back up the runway, not even glancing at her predictably low score of 9.162, and looked toward her coaches for guidance. Martha Karolyi looked back at her hopefully but said nothing. Bela Karolyi shouted that she needed a 9.6 on her second vault. "You can do it," she heard her teammates scream over the crowd of 22,040. She said a short, silent prayer and made her decision. She would challenge the darkness.

Anesthetized by adrenaline and determination, she approached the apparatus with even more speed than before, catapulted herself into the air for 1 1/2 rotations and landed solidly on both feet.

As the pain shot through her leg, she heard another pop. Still, she gritted her teeth, lifted her left foot a few inches off the mat to take the pressure off the ankle and raised her arms over her head. She did not let go of that pose until she was sure that the judges registered that she had aced the landing. Then she collapsed.

She was carried off the stage, placed on a stretcher and taken from there. "I should have gone back to Bela and done something," she said the other day. "I know a lot of gymnasts don't like this style. They

like a more relaxed, not as disciplined program. But I like his training methods better, assuring them that the US women would win the team gold for the first time in the Olympics.

"I knew if I didn't do it, we weren't going to win the gold medal," she said. "I thought everything we had worked for was going to fall apart in a few seconds."

As we now know, the United States would have won even without Strug's second vault. After two days of competition in compulsory and optional routines, the Americans finished with an advantage of more than eight-tenths of a point over the favored Russians.

The Russians could have won only if their last compulsory on the floor exercise had scored 10.8. Since the ultimate score is 10.0, she would not have gotten that in Novosibirsk, much less Atlanta.

It was an ecstatic group of US gymnasts and coaches who met the media later in a tent outside the Georgia Dome. They were minus Strug. The sign outside the door said that she was at Crawford Long Hospital.

It was a not-so-subtle reminder that moments of glory for athletes often come with a price. Some reporters wondered whether the one Strug paid was too high.

Did the two US head coaches, including one of Strug's personal coaches, Martha Karolyi, know that the team had clinched the title even before Strug's second vault? If not, should they have so that they could have prevented her from risking further injury?

They are legitimate questions. The answers are "no" and "maybe." But they are irrelevant in Strug's case because it is not likely that her coaches, even the burly Bela, could have wrestled her off the stage.

Even if she knew that she and her teammates had the team gold all but wrapped around their necks before her second vault, she said later that she would have gone for it because she needed a higher score to insure that she was one of three Americans to advance to Thursday night's all-around finals.

"I'm 18 years old now," she said after returning to the Georgia Dome on crutches



to meet the press. "I can make my own choices."

Now she might not go to the all-around finals because of the injury. A member of the US Olympic Committee medical staff, Dr. Dan Carr, said that she has a severely sprained ankle and that there is a 50-50 chance whether she can compete Thursday. Realistically, the odds are probably less.

But whether she made the right or wrong choice, it was hers to make. Four years ago, when Strug was the youngest member of the US gymnastics team in Barcelona, she barely missed the all-around finals. Because of that disappointment, she vowed to stay in the sport through the Atlanta Olympics.

It was not an easy four years. She left Bela Karolyi in search of the perfect coach for her quiet, intense temperament. Five coaches later, she decided that he was it and returned to his gym in Houston last year.

Karolyi forged her performance early this year at the prestigious McDonald's Cup in Fort Worth. The star of his gym, 14-year-old national champion Dominique Moceanu, was entered, but Karolyi kept her out of the competition. He said that she had a heel injury, but the other reason was that he wanted to give Strug a chance to step forward. She did, winning the title to give her a much-needed confidence boost.

American Rousefulfills promise, wins 100 backstroke

By Michael Dobie
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

ATLANTA—He waited for this one, waited a long time, which made it worse. And then made it better.

Four years ago, Jeff Rouse stood on a second-place platform in Barcelona, Spain, the best in the world on second-place platform, and with the Canadian national anthem ringing in his ears made a promise to himself to hang around and try one more time.

Tuesday night, Rouse, 26, paid off on his promise with a rousing effort in his signature event, the 100-meter backstroke. The race was his from the moment he emerged from the start and after he touched the wall 54.10 seconds later. He lingered in the pool at the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center, the picture of victory in reverie.

"I visualized that moment for so long. I wanted to sit there and look up at everybody and bask in the moment," Rouse said. "But they didn't give me that long."

Actually, the US swim team didn't give anybody much time Tuesday night. Rouse's gold medal was one of three for the Americans—Amy Van Dyken

took the women's 100 butterfly, and the men's 4-by-100 free relay turned back their Russian counterparts on the strength of a world-record anchor by Gary Hall Jr. And the five medals earned overall raised the US total to 17, more than double its closest competitor and far in excess of predictions that this would be one of the weaker US Olympic squads.

"For underdogs, we have quite a big bite," Van Dyken said. "People weren't expecting a lot from us, but we were expecting a lot from ourselves."

None more so than Rouse. He has dominated his event for six years and goes into retirement with four of the six best times in Olympic history. But his most memorable race, until Tuesday night, was the one he lost—the Olympic final in 1992, when Mark Tewksbury of Canada out-touched Rouse, 53.98 to 54.04. The following day, Rouse swam the medley relay and set the world record of 53.86 that

still stands. And he swam in dozens of other meets, winning many and losing a few.

"But none of those meets mattered to me. None. This is what mattered to me," Rouse said. "Take any successful person—in the business world, athletics, doctors. They didn't get where they are without failing once. That's what happened to me in '92."

Van Dyken had her brush with failure three days earlier when she was nipped by teammate Angel Martino for a bronze in the 100 freestyle. The 100 fly is a lesser event for Van Dyken, but the 23-year-old asthmatic was strong enough. Despite all that, the Marlins lost, 7-1.

If Van Dyken's effort as stirring, Hall's was stunning. The American quarter, which included Jon Olsen, Josh Davis and Bradley Schumacher, was trailing the Russian squad by a full body length when Hall leaped from the block. When he emerged from the water, somehow he was ahead. He blistered the first 50 in 21.87 and finished the 100 in 47.45, which broke the long-standing world record of 47.66 set by Matt Biondi in 1985.

The gold kept intact the US record of never having lost the event in Olympic or world championship competition and was the 100th Olympic swimming gold medal earned by US men.

Said Olsen: "That is what this relay is all about—carrying on the tradition."

The evening produced a pair of double gold-medal winners in Penny Heyns and Danyon Loader. Loader, a New Zealand, won the men's 400 free in 3:47.97 to bookend the 200 free title he won earlier. And South Africa's Heyns became the first woman to sweep the Olympic breaststroke events, adding the 200 Tuesday night in record fashion. After breaking the world record earlier in the 100, Heyns twice lowered the Olympic record in the 200, to 2:26.63 in the prelims and 2:25.41 in the final. That, too, was a replay of the 100 in that she again had to hold off a late charge from 14-year-old American Amanda Beard.

Beard's final, 50 was even more impressive than Van Dyken's charge as Beard cut a lead of nearly three seconds to a mere 0.34. "The last 50 meters I was saying no matter how much it hurts, I'll feel better after five minutes."

The only downer of the evening for the American squad was the failure of Tom Dolan to make the 400 free final. Dolan finished 11th in the heats, 1:29 seconds away from qualifying for the final. He won the 400 IM Sunday night and said mentally he was ready to race but his body had not recovered from his grueling duel with Eric Namesnik.

Cuban flyweight overwhelms US athlete

By William Gildea
LA Washington Post

ATLANTA—This afternoon was the first time an American and a Cuban had met in the ring in these Centennial Olympics. This session was different from any yet at the boxing venue, the circular Alexander Memorial Coliseum on the Georgia Tech campus. The sellout crowd of 9,500 was a mix of anticipation and tension.

US coach Al Mitchell told flyweight Eric Morel (112 pounds) to "jump on" Maikro Romero from the opening bell. This was it: Morel had worked for years for these nine minutes, trained in the dead of winter in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. "Rocky" music blared.

And then Romero swept out of his locker room, ignoring the chants of "USA" as he waved and danced backward confidently toward the ring in his blue robe. And then Mitchell's plan went wrong.

Morel came out tentatively and Romero

"jumped on" him. In three minutes, the Cuban amassed an insurmountable 8-1 lead and went on to win the three-rounder easily, 24-12. Morel did everything he could; the Cuban was better.

Morel wept in his dressing room. Mitchell wept with him. "I wanted this bout bad," said Mitchell, openly reflecting the hopes of the American team and its fans. "I had the person with the talent to do it. It just didn't get done."

Mitchell, assistant coach Jesse Ravelo and Morel agreed: Morel simply didn't follow the plan to jab often early, avoid getting hit, keep the score low in the first round. "It was all my fault," said Morel. "They told me what to do. They really know what they're doing." House Speaker Newt Gingrich (Ga.), Senate Finance Committee Chairman William V. Roth Jr. (Del.) and Bush administration official Jack Kemp belittled what they described as a "pathetic" and "puny" 2.2 percent annual economic growth for the Americans' overall record to 7-1 with an easy 20-4 victory over Lee Wan Kyun of South Korea. ■

INTERFA

BY ZEID NASSER

IPR Enforcement in Jordan (4): The rise and fall of pirate shops

THE PEOPLE most adamant against the enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR) laws in Jordan are the shops and businesses that deal in illegal software.

Over the last decade, these shops have arisen to serve the growing needs of computer users, as there was a time when original software was not available at all in the country. International software publishers had no presence in Jordan. This introduced an opportunity at the time and has resulted in a booming business for many.

Since 1992, when Parliament passed a 'copyrights law', these shops have been under mild pressure from the Government to mend their ways and stop selling illegal copies of software products.

More pressure hit these shops from software distributors, appointed over the last five years in Jordan. Companies like Microsoft, Lotus, Computer Associates, Novell, Netscape and others are all represented in the country and are all pushing for a crackdown on piracy. Their prime target is always these shops.

Once, Microsoft's office in Jordan asked the biggest piracy shop in Amman to replace all its illegal copies of Microsoft software with originals, without pressing any charges against its illegal activities. The idea was to get the original software into the shop. The original software sat on the shelves like decoration, while the illegal copies sold like hot cakes.

Jordanian software developers have been more fortunate, as there seems to be an unwritten 'code of honour' between these shop owners and local software houses. In a 'weird' paradoxical sense, they refuse to sell illegal copies of Jordanian software, but break the law on every piece of software that is not 'Jordanian'. Although it is sold by a Jordanian distributor.

Amidst this mess, there are still several international software companies whose products are nowhere to be seen. Therefore, you still cannot purchase their original software inside the country. That's where the pirate shops claim to be serving users. Of course, the fact that a piece of software is not available anywhere in Jordan does not mean that it is legal to trade illegal copies of it. It is completely against the law.

One of the interesting points is that Jordanian software developers themselves admit, very reservedly, of the 'unethical' but 'useful' aspect that pirate shops may present in such cases.

Because developers respect IPR, they have to order so much software and many development tools from abroad because they are simply not available. They joke about the fact that it would be so much easier to put aside 'the ethical aspect' for a day, and actually go down to Gadsida (Wastai Tal) Street and purchase the software package they need.

In fact, the shop can even provide user with technical support and assistance, just like a legitimate dealer would!

What will happen to these shops when IPR laws are enforced in Jordan? Well, most have already branched into hardware and accessories sales, capitalizing on the loyalty of their customers. Also, they seem to be generating much more business nowadays from the sales of supplies like empty disks—storage media in general—and accessories. These shops are re-positioning themselves as ideal retail outlets for all sorts of computer and technology related products.

In a way, they should help complete that missing link in the Jordanian marketing chain, because, till this day, the companies that are master dealers for products in Jordan sell directly to all clients, therefore limiting the wider distribution potentials that can be offered by shops. For software, the wider distribution model would be very beneficial.

In any case, there is more to the story of pirate shops in Jordan than has been told. In the coming two weeks, we will conclude our series on piracy in Jordan, and touch again on the topic of shops dealing in illegal software. ■